The Westminster Senior Intermediate Quarterly

APRIL ~ MAY ~ JUNE

1922

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Prepared by Hugh T. Kerr, D.D., LL.D. Edited by John T. Faris, D.D.

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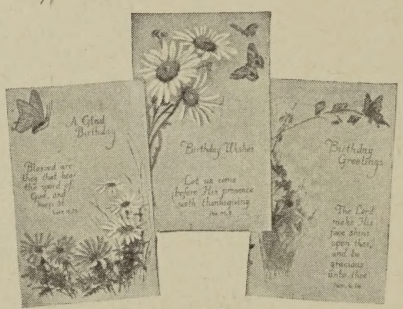

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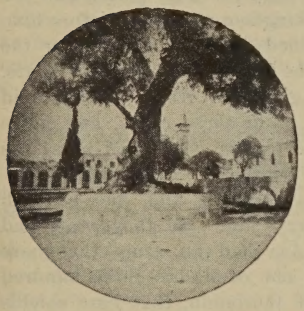
FOREWORD



The study of history is the study of God's government of the world. Kingdoms and nations rise and fall, but the "kingdom that cannot be shaken" abides and increases in power through the centuries.

In the lessons of this quarter we study the history of the Kingdom of Judah, which lasted for three and a half centuries. When we remember that Jerusalem was the capital of Judah, and that in Jerusalem the Temple of God bore constant witness to the fact that the nation owed its origin and well-being to God alone, we wonder at the blindness of the people who left the thought of God and of his law out of their policies.

Let us, however, remember that we have Jesus who is our ever-present Guide, and that our nation often forgets him and neglects his Word and his law. Nations that do not fit into God's purpose are swept away. For nations, as for people, to do the will of God is to abide.

Do not follow only the verses printed in the Quarterly, but read the entire history as given in the Bible. The Bible, not the Quarterly, is our Sunday-school textbook.

Yours very sincerely,

Hugh T. Kerr

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ASA RELIES ON GOD

THE GOLDEN TEXT—"Help us, O Jehovah our God; for we rely on thee."—II Chron. 14: 11.

TEXT OF LESSON, II Chron. 14: 1-12

COMMON VERSION

1 So A-bi'jah slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city of Da'vid: and A'sa his son reigned in his stead. In his days the land was quiet ten years.

2 And A'sa did *that which was* good and right in the eyes of the LORD his God:

3 For he took away the altars of the strange *gods*, and the high places, and brake down the images, and cut down the groves:

4 And commanded Ju'dah to seek the LORD God of their fathers, and to do the law and the commandment.

5 Also he took away out of all the cities of Ju'dah the high places and the images: and the kingdom was quiet before him.

6 ¶ And he built fenced cities in Ju'dah: for the land had rest, and he had no war in those years; because the LORD had given him rest.

7 Therefore he said unto Ju'dah, Let us build these cities, and make about *them* walls, and towers, gates, and bars, *while* the land *is* yet before us; because we have sought the LORD our God, we have sought *him*, and he hath given us rest on every side. So they built and prospered.

8 And A'sa had an army *of men* that bare targets and spears, out of Ju'dah three hundred thousand; and out of Ben'ja-min, that bare shields and drew bows, two hundred and fourscore thousand: all these *were* mighty men of valour.

9 ¶ And there came out against them Ze'rah the E-thi-o'pi-an with an host of a thousand thousand, and three hundred chariots; and came unto Ma-re'shah.

10 Then A'sa went out against him, and they set the battle in array in the valley of Zeph'a-thah at Ma-re'shah.

11 And A'sa cried unto the LORD his God, and said, LORD, *it is* nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power: help us, O LORD our God; for we rest on thee, and in thy name we go against this multitude. O LORD, thou *art* our God; let not man prevail against thee.

12 So the LORD smote the E-thi-o'pi-ans before A'sa, and before Ju'dah; and the E-thi-o'pi-ans fled.

AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE

1 So Abijah slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city of David; and Asa his son reigned in his stead. In his days the land was quiet ten years. 2 And Asa did that which was good and right in the eyes of Jehovah his God: 3 for he took away the foreign altars, and the high places, and brake down the pillars, and hewed down the Asherim, 4 and commanded Judah to seek Jehovah, the God of their fathers, and to do the law and the commandment. 5 Also he took away out of all the cities of Judah the high places and the sun-images: and the kingdom was quiet before him. 6 And he built fortified cities in Judah; for the land was quiet, and he had no war in those years, because Jehovah had given him rest. 7 For he said unto Judah, Let us build these cities, and make about them walls, and towers, gates, and bars; the land is yet before us, because we have sought Jehovah our God; we have sought him, and he hath given us rest on every side. So they built and prospered. 8 And Asa had an army that bare bucklers and spears, out of Judah three hundred thousand; and out of Benjamin, that bare shields and drew bows, two hundred and fourscore thousand: all these were mighty men of valor.

9 And there came out against them Zerah the Ethiopian with an army of a thousand thousand, and three hundred chariots; and he came unto Mareshah. 10 Then Asa went out to meet him, and they set the battle in array in the valley of Zephathah at Mareshah. 11 And Asa cried unto Jehovah his God, and said, Jehovah, there is none besides thee to help, between the mighty and him that hath no strength: help us, O Jehovah our God; for we rely on thee, and in thy name are we come against this multitude. O Jehovah, thou art our God; let not man prevail against thee. 12 So Jehovah smote the Ethiopians before Asa, and before Judah; and the Ethiopians fled.

The Time—Asa reigned from 911 B.C. to 870 B.C.

The Place—Jerusalem.

DAILY HOME READINGS

DATE	TITLE	REFERENCE
Monday, March 27	A Good King	II Chron. 14 : 1-8.
Tuesday, March 28	Trusting God in Time of War	II Chron. 14 : 9-13.
Wednesday, March 29	Trusting God in Time of Peace	II Chron. 15 : 1-12.
Thursday, March 30	A Song of Trust	Psalm 27.
Friday, March 31	A Queen's Reliance on God	Esth. 4 : 9-17.
Saturday, April 1	Three Princes Rely on God	Dan. 3 : 8-18.
Sunday, April 2	The Power and Goodness of God	Ps. 145 : 1-10.

DIFFICULT WORDS AND PHRASES

1. Asa his son. The son of Abijah, known also as Abijam, and grandson of Rehoboam. See also I Kings 15 : 9-24. He reigned over Judah for forty-one years.

7. The land is yet before us. The land was quiet. There was no enemy within their borders, so that it was possible to devote all energies to the conquests of peace.

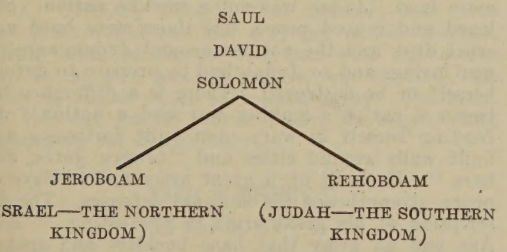
9. Zerah the Ethiopian. Probably Osorkon II, an Egyptian Pharaoh. Some scholars think he was an Arabian chief. This is the only place he is mentioned.

10. Mareshah. See Josh. 15 : 44; II Chron. 11 : 8. A fortified city in Judah. The battle-field in the war between Asa and Zerah.

11. There is none besides thee. See margin. "There is no difference with thee to help, whether the mighty or him that hath no strength." God could help the weak as well as the strong. And he can help them to-day.

THE LESSONS OF THE QUARTER

With this lesson we begin the study of a new quarter. For three months we are to study the history of Judah, the Southern Kingdom. The topic for the quarter is "Prophets and Kings in Judah." The lessons last quarter were all based upon the history of Israel, the Northern Kingdom. After the death of Solomon, the kingdom was divided into Israel, the Northern Kingdom, and Judah, the Southern Kingdom. Jeroboam became king of the Northern Kingdom and we traced the history of Israel through to her downfall. We studied the story of her kings and prophets. Now we go back again to that same period, when Rehoboam became king of Judah, and we trace the history of Judah down through her kings and prophets to the destruction of the kingdom and the Exile and Captivity of Judah. The third quarter will deal with the period of the Exile and the Restoration of the Jewish nation.



REHOBOAM—THE FIRST KING

When Solomon died, Rehoboam his son was crowned king at Jerusalm. The people of the North who were always jealous of the South, demanded that Rehoboam should lighten their burdens of taxation and forced labor which Solomon his father had placed upon them. Rehoboam was young and reckless and replied, "My father made your yoke heavy, but I will add to your yoke: my father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions." So the people of the North rebelled against the rule of Rehoboam and threw off their allegiance to him and made Jeroboam king. Rehoboam began a movement to compel all Israel to acknowledge him as king but the prophet Shemaiah forbade his making war on his brethren and after five years Shishak, King of Egypt, invaded the land and stripped the Temple of its wealth and left Rehoboam helpless. He was careless in his life and neglected the worship of God and allowed foreign religions to set up idols in the land. The story of his reign is summed up in one verse: "And it came to pass, when the kingdom of Rehoboam was established, and he was strong, that he forsook the law of Jehovah, and all Israel with him." Who wants an epitaph like that?

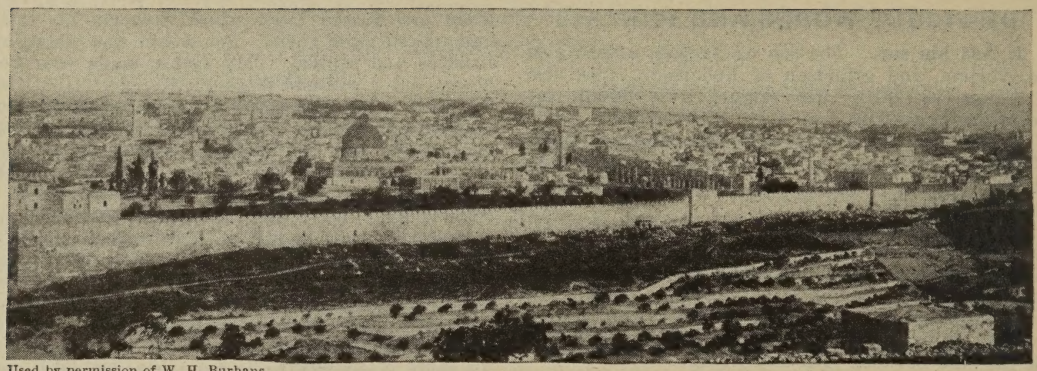
ABIJAH—THE SECOND KING

After the death of Rehoboam, who reigned for seventeen years, his son Abijah was made king. The story of his reign is told in II Chron., ch. 13, and I Kings 15 : 1-8. He reigned over Judah only three years and declared war upon Israel, the Northern Kingdom. The story as told in I Kings 15 : 1-8 reads like a long and continuous war, but the story as recorded in II Chron., ch. 13, is of one decisive battle. With four hundred thousand men Abijah went up against Jeroboam who had eight hundred thousand men. The men of Judah committed themselves unto God and won a complete victory. Jeroboam was crippled but not subdued. The story reads: "And Abijah and his people slew them with a great slaughter: so there fell down slain of Israel five hundred thousand chosen men. Thus the children of Israel were brought under at that time, and the children of Judah prevailed, because they relied upon Jehovah, the God of their fathers." Abijah gained for Judah both security and peace, and when he died the whole country was altogether quiet.

ASA—THE THIRD KING

II Chron. 14 : 1

Asa was the son of Abijah and entered into the inheritance of peace which had been secured for Judah by Abijah's victory over Jeroboam. Asa ruled over Judah about forty years and the story of his reign forms a very interesting and on the whole splendid record which can be read both in The First Book of the Kings and The Second Book of the Chronicles. See I Kings 15 : 9-24 and II Chron., chs. 14 to 16. In our day we would call Asa a reformer. We would classify him with Luther and Knox. He was, however, not only a great moral and religious reformer, but also a great soldier. He built permanent fortresses and



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THE WALLS OF JERUSALEM

established his nation in safety and in peace so that it enjoyed liberty and prosperity for many years. The record reads that "the heart of Asa was perfect all his days." In the fifteenth year of his reign, the nation made a solemn covenant with God. "And they sacrificed unto Jehovah in that day, of the spoil which they had brought, seven hundred oxen and seven thousand sheep. And they entered into the covenant to seek Jehovah, the God of their fathers, with all their heart and with all their soul; and that whosoever would not seek Jehovah, the God of Israel, should be put to death, whether small or great, whether man or woman."

THE GREAT REFORMER

II Chron. 14 : 2-5

It is very difficult for us in our day to understand the ease with which the people of God drifted into idolatry and heathen worship. When we remember that the people of the land of Canaan had been idol worshipers for centuries and that the surrounding nations, Syria, Phœnicia, Egypt, Moab, Assyria all worshiped idols, we can see how hard it was for the people of God to remain true to their faith. It is hard enough in our day for Christians to keep from doing the same things which are done by worldly people. It requires watchfulness to keep true to God, to remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy, to be faithful in attendance at the house of prayer.

There are two ways of fighting evil. One is by removing the temptation; the other is by being strong enough to ignore temptation. When we can, we should remove the temptation from the path. This was Asa's plan. "He took away the foreign altars, and the high places, and brake down the pillars, and hewed down the Asherim, and commanded Judah to seek Jehovah, the God of their fathers, and to do the law and the commandment. Also he took away out of all the cities of Judah the high places and the sun-images: and the kingdom was quiet before him." In the same way we destroyed the saloon and the liquor traffic. We close up gambling dens, we imprison criminals, we try to keep the city and the country safe for boys and girls. If you had the power, what are some of the things you would destroy? What is the duty of all who have authority, toward the things that harm and hurt the city and the nation? What are you planning to do to help movements for better conditions?

A GREAT SOLDIER

II Chron. 14 : 6-8

There is an old saying to the effect, "In time of peace prepare for war." Sometimes it leads to dangerous results. Following that rule, Germany led the world into the great World War. The fact is, we should never prepare to make war. We can prepare to defend ourselves against those who make war upon us.

This was what Asa did. He was content to dwell at peace with other nations. Judah did not want more land. Judah was not a warlike nation. She loved and craved peace, but those were hard and cruel days and the nations around Judah were all war loving, and so Judah had to prepare to defend herself or be destroyed. There is a difference between a nation's making war and a nation's defending herself in war. Asa built fortresses and built walls around cities and "towers, gates, and bars." He built up a great army and in days of peace, strengthened the national defenses. The description of his great army is interesting. "And Asa had an army that bare bucklers and spears, out of Judah three hundred thousand; and out of Benjamin, that bare shields and drew bows, two hundred and fourscore thousand: all these were mighty men of valor."

One would think that Asa trusted more in horses and in chariots than in God, but this is not so. All

through the story of his preparation for war defense, there runs the story of his fidelity to God. It was God who had given the land rest from the enemy. Judah enjoyed peace because she had sought after Jehovah and "he hath given us rest on every side." It was because they trusted God that they prepared against the possible attack of their enemies.

"Trust in God and keep your powder dry," or as Theodore Roosevelt used to say, "Trust in God and help yourself." Prayer and work go together. The student who studies hard and asks God's help will succeed. We cannot trust God if we are careless and idle and indifferent. The great missionary to the American Indians, John Eliot, used to say that prayer and pains, through faith in Jesus Christ, will do anything. He himself tested out his own rule and found it to be true. Asa had faith in God and he trusted him to help him, and his faith in God made him alert and watchful and industrious.

WAR WITH EGYPT

II Chron. 14 : 9, 10

We do not know much about Zerah the Ethiopian. Perhaps he was one of the kings who followed Shishak the Great. He heard of Asa's great prosperity and envied him. He knew of his great army and coveted the chance of battle, for those were days when men grew great through warring with their neighbors.

Asa's great army was not so great as that of Zerah. Asa had an army of five hundred thousand men, but the Egyptian army numbered over a million. The Egyptians outnumbered the Hebrews two to one, and the chances of success on the part of Asa and his army seemed small. Not only had Zerah a million men but he had also three hundred war chariots and with this great war machine he came up to Mareshah, the fortress that stood on the edge of Judah, on the side that faced Egypt.

It was like the vast army which Germany threw against France in the days of the great World War. Germany thought that numbers and force and guns would win the war, and in like manner, Zerah, King of Egypt, felt that with double the number of men and with great war chariots, the army of Judah would soon waste away. The heart of Asa was fearful when he saw the mighty host coming up out of the desert.

THE VERDICT

II Chron. 14 : 11

Judah, however, had an Ally about whom Egypt did not know. Napoleon once said, "God is on the side of the heaviest battalions," but it has also been said, "One with God makes a majority." God is not on the side of the greatest material power. He is on the side of righteousness. So Asa appealed to God for help. He uttered a very beautiful prayer.

"And Asa cried unto Jehovah his God, and said, Jehovah, there is none besides thee to help, between the mighty and him that hath no strength: help us, O Jehovah our God; for we rely on thee, and in thy name are we come against this multitude. O Jehovah, thou art our God; let not man prevail against thee." He had faith in God's power and believed that God could help weakness as easily as he could help strength. And God answered Asa's prayer and the army of Egypt was beaten and destroyed and Judah was established in peace and still greater prosperity. God often gives victory to the weak. When the small craft of England defeated the great Spanish Armada—a victory which gave us an English Protestant civilization—the people said, "God sent out his wind and scattered them." God gives the final victory to the right.

FOR INTERMEDIATE PUPILS

1. Who was the first king of Judah?
2. What relation was Asa to the first king of Judah?
3. What fine qualities did Asa possess? How do you account for them?
4. How did Asa try to establish the worship of God?
5. Who attempted to destroy Judah?
6. For what did Asa pray unto God?

The Intermediate Catechism

Q. 18. How do we receive Jesus Christ as our Saviour?

A. We receive Jesus Christ as our Saviour by repentance and faith.

Q. 19. What is it to repent?

A. To repent is to be truly sorry for sin and to turn from it unto God for forgiveness, with sincere purpose to do God's will.

FOR SENIOR STUDENTS

1. When did Judah become a separate nation? From what nation did it separate?
2. Name the first three kings of Judah?
3. Why is Asa called a reformer?
4. How did Asa prepare to defend his nation against war?
5. What was the relative strength of the armies of Judah and of Egypt?
6. What was the result of Asa's battle with Zerah, the Ethiopian?

The Shorter Catechism

Q. 66. What is the reason annexed to the fifth commandment?

A. The reason annexed to the fifth commandment is, a promise of long life and prosperity (as far as it shall serve for God's glory, and their own good) to all such as keep this commandment.

THE LORD PRESERVES JOASH

THE GOLDEN TEXT—"Jehovah preserveth all them that love him."—Ps. 145: 20.

TEXT OF LESSON, II Kings 11: 1-4, 11-17

For entire lesson, see II Kings 11: 1-17

COMMON VERSION

1 And when Ath-a-li'ah the mother of A-ha-zi'ah saw that her son was dead, she arose and destroyed all the seed royal.

2 But Je-hosh'e-ba, the daughter of king Jo'ram, sister of A-ha-zi'ah, took Jo'ash the son of A-ha-zi'ah, and stole him from among the king's sons *which were* slain; and they hid him, *even* him and his nurse, in the bedchamber from Ath-a-li'ah, so that he was not slain.

3 And he was with her hid in the house of the Lord six years. And Ath-a-li'ah did reign over the land.

4 ¶ And the seventh year Je-hoi'a-da sent and fetched the rulers over hundreds, with the captains and the guard, and brought them to him into the house of the LORD, and made a covenant with them, and took an oath of them in the house of the LORD, and shewed them the king's son.

* * * * *

11 And the guard stood, every man with his weapons in his hand, round about the king, from the right corner of the temple to the left corner of the temple, *along* by the altar and the temple.

12 And he brought forth the king's son, and put the crown upon him, and *gave him* the testimony; and they made him king, and anointed him; and they clapped their hands, and said, God save the king.

13 ¶ And when Ath-a-li'ah heard the noise of the guard *and* of the people, she came to the people into the temple of the LORD.

14 And when she looked, behold, the king stood by a pillar, as the manner *was*, and the princes and the trumpeters by the king, and all the people of the land rejoiced, and blew with trumpets: and Ath-a-li'ah rent her clothes, and cried, Treason, Treason.

15 But Je-hoi'a-da the priest commanded the captains of the hundreds, the officers of the host, and said unto them, Have her forth without the ranges: and him that followeth her kill with the sword. For the priest had said, Let her not be slain in the house of the LORD.

16 And they laid hands on her; and she went by the way by the which the horses came into the king's house: and there was she slain.

17 ¶ And Je-hoi'a-da made a covenant between the LORD and the king and the people, that they should be the LORD'S people; between the king also and the people.

AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE

1 Now when Athaliah the mother of Ahaziah saw that her son was dead, she arose and destroyed all the seed royal. 2 But Jehosheba, the daughter of king Joram, sister of Ahaziah, took Joash the son of Ahaziah, and stole him away from among the king's sons that were slain, even him and his nurse, *and put them* in the bedchamber; and they hid him from Athaliah, so that he was not slain. 3 And he was with her hid in the house of Jehovah six years: and Athaliah reigned over the land.

4 And in the seventh year Jehoiada sent and fetched the captains over hundreds, of the Carites and of the guard, and brought them to him into the house of Jehovah; and he made a covenant with them, and took an oath of them in the house of Jehovah, and showed them the king's son.

* * * * *

11 And the guard stood, every man with his weapons in his hand, from the right side of the house to the left side of the house, along by the altar and the house, by the king round about. 12 Then he brought out the king's son, and put the crown upon him, and *gave him* the testimony; and they made him king, and anointed him; and they clapped their hands, and said, *Long* live the king.

13 And when Athaliah heard the noise of the guard *and of* the people, she came to the people into the house of Jehovah: 14 and she looked, and, behold, the king stood by the pillar, as the manner was, and the captains and the trumpets by the king; and all the people of the land rejoiced, and blew trumpets. Then Athaliah rent her clothes, and cried, Treason! treason! 15 And Jehoiada the priest commanded the captains of hundreds that were set over the host, and said unto them, Have her forth between the ranks; and him that followeth her slay with the sword: for the priest said, Let her not be slain in the house of Jehovah. 16 So they made way for her; and she went by the way of the horses' entry to the king's house: and there was she slain.

17 And Jehoiada made a covenant between Jehovah and the king and the people, that they should be Jehovah's people; between the king also and the people.

The Time—842 B.C. to 835 B.C.

The Place—Jerusalem.

DAILY HOME READINGS

Date	Title	Reference
Monday, April 3	How a Boy Became King	II Kings 11 : 1-12.
Tuesday, April 4	How God's Priest Helped	II Kings 11 : 13-20.
Wednesday, April 5	The Story Retold	II Chron. 22 : 10 to 23 : 11.
Thursday, April 6	God Preserves Moses	Ex. 2 : 1-10.
Friday, April 7	God Preserves Joseph	Gen. 39 : 1-6.
Saturday, April 8	God Preserves the Child Jesus	Matt. 2 : 13-23.
Sunday, April 9	God Saves and Satisfies	Ps. 145 : 10-21.

DIFFICULT WORDS AND PHRASES

1. Athaliah. A daughter of Ahab and Jezebel, and wife of Jehoram, King of Judah. She introduced Baal worship into Judah. She was an unnatural, wicked woman.

2. In the bedchamber. One of the side rooms connected with the Temple. He was cared for by Jehoiada the priest, and his wife Jehosheba.

12. The testimony. The word means "a copy of the law" but here perhaps the meaning is "bracelets," part of the coronation insignia of the king. See II Sam. 1 : 10.

14. By the pillar. The margin has "on the platform," from which the king addressed the people.

THE KINGS OF JUDAH

Let us try to keep in mind the order of the kings of the Kingdom of Judah. The first king was Rehoboam who began his reign 931 B.C. and reigned seventeen years. He was followed by Abijah his son who reigned three years. The third king was Asa, about whom we studied in our last lesson, and his reign was for a period of about forty years. Asa was succeeded by Jehoshaphat, 876 B.C., who reigned twenty-five years. He was king of Judah when Ahab was king of Israel, and Elijah and Elisha were speaking their strong messages to the people of the north. Jehoshaphat was succeeded by Jehoram who was king eight years. Ahaziah followed Jehoram and reigned only one year. Ahaziah was the son of Athaliah, a daughter of Ahab and Jezebel, and introduced Baal worship in Judah. He suffered a sudden and violent death. This period covers about one hundred years of the history of Judah. In our last lesson Asa was establishing the faith of God in Judah, but as we begin the lesson this week, Ahaziah and his mother Athaliah had turned the nation away from God and established the worship of Baal in the land.

A ROYAL MURDERER

II Kings 11 : 1

Athaliah was the daughter of Ahab, and the wicked and heathen Jezebel. She was the mother of King Ahaziah and acted as queen mother. In this position she had great power and used her influence and position to establish Baal worship in Judah. The account of what she did is found in II Chron. 22 : 1-9. When her son Ahaziah, whom she controlled, was killed, she attempted to murder all the royal house in order that she, herself, should be made queen and still control the nation. It was a daring deed, and only a bold, wicked, courageous woman would have attempted it. She did not wholly succeed but she accomplished her immediate purpose and for six years reigned as queen of Judah.

She was like her mother Jezebel. While it is not wise to think too much about the influence of what is called "heredity," it is easily understood how a bad mother produces a bad daughter. Jezebel was bold and wicked and idolatrous, and her daughter Athaliah followed in her footsteps. The influence of parents is seen in the conduct of their children.

THE YOUNG PRINCE JOASH

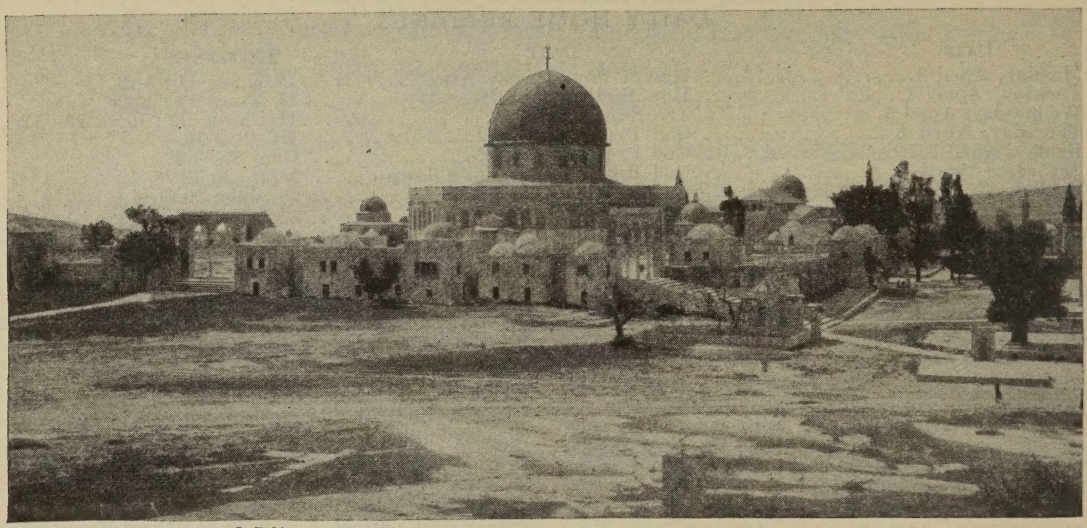
II Kings 11 : 2, 3

The plan of Athaliah was only partly successful. She did not succeed in killing off all the royal family. She thought she did. But God planned otherwise. King Ahaziah had a little son less than a year old, and when his relatives were destroyed, he was overlooked. A little baby did not count for much. He was saved by the quick thought and action of a good woman. Her name was Jehosheba, or Jehoshabeath. She was the daughter of the former king of Judah, Jehoram, and so was the aunt of the little baby. She was also the wife of Jehoiada, the priest of the Temple. II Chron. 22 : 11.

She and her husband, who were true to God, took the little baby boy whose name was Joash, and hid him in one of the rooms of the Temple. The Temple had many rooms and of course was a secure hiding place, and for six years he was safe in their keeping. During those six years the wicked Athaliah ruled over the land and led the nation farther and farther away from God, until the people became rebellious and bitter at her wickedness and her power.

Meanwhile the child Joash was trained and cared for by the priest Jehoiada and his wife. It would be a strange life for the child, but he had loving care and was guarded day and night by his nurse, and by his adopted father and mother, the priest and his wife.

They saw that he was carefully trained in the true worship of God, and we do not wonder that when he became king, he was not only loyal to them, but loyal also to Jehovah the true God. The Tem-



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THE MOSQUE OF OMAR

ple became very dear to him for it had been the only home he knew.

THE PLAN OF THE PRIEST

II Kings 11 : 4-10

(These verses are not printed, but they give the details of Jehoiada's plan.)

In the seventh year of Joash, the priest Jehoiada laid a plan to deprive Athaliah of her power and to set the boy Joash on the throne. The people had become very restless and bitter during the cruel and idolatrous reign of Queen Athaliah, and the priest felt that if she could be removed and Joash enthroned Joash could be counseled and guided by those who feared Jehovah and loved the nation. When the time was ripe he took the captains and leaders of the army into his confidence, showed them the boy Joash, told them about his escape, and his hiding place, and asked their help to get rid of the evil queen. They were very ready to help and promised to keep secret the plan.

The arrangements are not very clear but were something like this: On the sabbath two thirds of the military force were to be at the Temple, and one third at the palace of the queen. The Temple guard was to be so arranged as to protect the young king, and the guard around the palace placed so as to keep the friends of the queen from leaving the palace and making trouble. The captains kept their pledge and on the sabbath all arrangements were made for the crowning of the new king. It was a bold plan for Jehoiada to carry out, but he had courage and good support and the plan succeeded.

LONG LIVE THE KING

II Kings 11 : 11, 12

When the guards were placed so as to protect the king, the priest brought him out upon the raised platform and presented him to the people. What a thrilling moment it must have been! They were tired and weary of Athaliah but saw no way of escape from her. They thought all the royal family had been slain. But here was a son of the former king, a real prince, heir to the throne, hidden for six or seven years in the Temple without their knowledge. The people looked on with joy in their hearts when Jehoiada put the crown upon the lad's head and the bracelets upon his arms, and anointed him king as had been done in the days of David and Solomon. When the ceremony was finished all the people clapped their hands and cried out, "Long live the king!" It must have been a scene never to be forgotten by those who witnessed it. The boy king would only half understand, but behind him stood Jehoiada, the priest, wise and true and willing to do all he could to restore again the worship of God, and bring back righteousness to the nation.

THE END OF ATHALIAH

II Kings 11 : 13-16

The noise of the applause, the blowing of the trumpets, and the marching of the guard, reached the palace, and Athaliah the queen rushed to the Temple. She, however, came alone, for the palace was guarded by the soldiers who had been stationed there and she alone was permitted to leave.

She saw in a moment what the tumult meant, for there in the Temple was the platform (see margin) and the king with the crown, and the captains and the trumpeters, and all the people wild with joy. She knew that a new king had been crowned. Perhaps she had been suspicious of something like this happening. She had never been crowned queen and had only kept her place because she was strong and cruel. When she saw all and understood what had happened, she rent her clothes and cried, "Treason! treason!" She thought nothing of the terrible treason of which she had been guilty, and now charged the people with disloyalty to her. But there was no one to help her. The guards had all sworn loyalty to the priests and Athaliah was helpless. She could not even return to the palace. She, herself of her own will had left the security of the palace and was a prisoner in the Temple. The plan of Jehoiada was even more successful than he had dreamed. Not only did the people receive their new king with joy, but the treacherous queen delivered herself into their hands. Evil always comes to a bitter and sad end. The guards made a lane for her to pass out of the Temple, for the priest had ordered that she should not be harmed while there, but when she had left the Temple and was about to enter the palace by the carriage entrance, she was slain. Thus perished one of the most wicked and cruel women of history. She who had slain her own family by the sword was now slain by her own servants. She reaped just what she had sown.

THE COVENANT WITH JEHOVAH

II Kings 11 : 17

We need not discuss the way in which Athaliah met her death. She was a murderess, a guilty criminal, and she suffered for her crimes. With her death the nation took on new life. The people led by the priest Jehoiada made a solemn covenant both to the king and to God, and the king in turn pledged his loyalty both to God and the people. A new order of things began. The Temple worship was restored, the altars of Baal which Athaliah had erected were destroyed, and the temple of Baal was thrown down.

The story of how Joash, who is sometimes called Jehoash, guided by Jehoiada, restored the Temple, is one of great interest. It should be read in II Kings, ch. 12. The people were so changed in their lives that they not only gave themselves but their money so that the Temple of God which had been neglected might be restored to its lovely beauty.

This lesson is called "The Lord Preserves Joash," and it is impossible to study it without seeing that behind all the strange events that are related, God's hand was guiding. He preserved and guided and cared for Joash before Joash was conscious of his royal name, and before he knew God. So he guides us. He is our Shepherd. He leads us "in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake." Let us not forget Jehoiada and his wife Jehosheba, for God used them to do his will. God cannot work without helpers. He needs human hands to do his work. "We are God's fellow-workers."

THE WORLD'S GREATEST SERVANTS

This lesson sets before us the characters of two strong women. One is Athaliah, the queen. The other is Jehosheba, the wife of the high priest. Athaliah was ambitious. She desired power. She secured it. But she misused it and her end was tragic and sudden. The character of Jehosheba is peculiarly winsome. She, too, was of royal birth. Her father was Jehoram, the king. Athaliah must have been her stepmother. We do not often read of royalty marrying into the priesthood. She was a quiet, kind-hearted, farseeing woman. She did not crave for power. She sought to be useful. She took the little child Joash and trained him for God, and did more for the kingdom, and for the glory of God than she could have done had she herself been made queen. The test of life is not place, nor power, but service. There is a little poem, written by Sarah K. Bolton, which fits into this lesson beautifully.

He built a house, time laid it in the dust.
He wrote a book, its title now forgot.
He ruled a city, but its name is not
On any tablet graven—
He took a child from out a wretched cot
Who on the state dishonor might have brought,
And reared him to the Christian hope and trust.
The boy to manhood grown became a light.
To many souls preached for human need,
The wondrous love of the Omnipotent.
The work has multiplied like stars at night,
When darkness deepens, every noble deed
Lasts longer than a granite monument.

REVERENCE FOR GOD'S HOUSE

Joash was brought up as a child in the Temple. The Temple was his home, his school, his church as it had been all these things to Samuel, years before. Later in life, when he became strong and great, he sought to restore the Temple and keep it sacred to the worship of God. One would think that living in the Temple all day and all night the sense of reverence would have died out of his heart. Reverence, however, does not belong to places or times or occasions. It is a spirit which we bear about with us. Reverence is just trusting in something higher than ourselves, and irreverence means that we are selfish and self-satisfied and vulgar and common. Surely all of us can find something that is high and noble and wonderful in the world to create in us a reverent spirit. It may be reverence for nature. One of the greatest of our scientists was accustomed to bow in the presence of a

budding flower. It may be reverence for our parents to whom we owe our lives and our happiness. It may be reverence for the place of prayer where memory and hope have mingled for years, and where our fathers before us met with God. One shrinks from the common and ordinary way in which many boys and girls and young people enter and conduct themselves in the house of God. They do not know what reverence means, and they lose more than they know. It may be reverence for self. They tell us that during one of his battles, Napoleon stabled his cavalry in Cologne Cathedral. Well, that may be allowed in time of war, but we shrink even from the thought of it. Stabling horses in the house of God! But what is that in comparison to what we permit to have a place in our lives, in our thoughts, in our imaginations? "Know ye not that ye are a temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" How impossible it would be for a boy to allow unclean thoughts and impure suggestions to have a place in his life, if he were conscious always of the fact that his life is the dwelling place of the Spirit of God.

FOR INTERMEDIATE PUPILS

1. Name the kings of Judah that preceded Joash.
2. Who was Athaliah?
3. How was Joash saved when his family was slain?
4. How and where was Joash made king?
5. How did Athaliah end her life?
6. What reforms did Joash introduce?

The Intermediate Catechism

Q. 20. What is faith in Jesus Christ?

A. Faith in Jesus Christ is believing on him and trusting him as our own Saviour and Lord.

Q. 21. How does God lead us to believe on Jesus Christ?

A. God leads us to believe on Jesus Christ by the work of the Holy Spirit in our hearts, showing us that we are sinful, and disposing and enabling us to accept him as he is offered to us in the gospel.

FOR SENIOR STUDENTS

1. What was Athaliah's motive in slaying the royal family?
2. Who cared for the child Joash?
3. What was Jehoiada's plan for the overthrow of Athaliah?
4. Tell the story of the coronation of Joash.
5. Why did the guards not protect Athaliah?
6. What covenant did the people and the king enter into?

The Shorter Catechism

Q. 67. Which is the sixth commandment?

A. The sixth commandment is, Thou shalt not kill.

Q. 68. What is required in the sixth commandment?

A. The sixth commandment requireth all lawful endeavors to preserve our own life, and the life of others.

Lesson III—EASTER LESSON

THE GOLDEN TEXT—"The Lord is risen indeed."—Luke 24: 34.

TEXT OF LESSON, John 20: 19-31

COMMON VERSION

19 ¶ Then the same day at evening, being the first *day* of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Je'sus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace *be* unto you.

20 And when he had so said, he shewed unto them *his* hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord.

21 Then said Je'sus to them again, Peace *be* unto you: as *my* Father hath sent me, even so send I you.

22 And when he had said this, he breathed on *them*, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost:

23 Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; *and* whose soever *sins* ye retain, they are retained.

24 ¶ But Thom'as, one of the twelve, called Did'-y-mus, was not with them when Je'sus came.

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19 When therefore it was evening, on that day, the first *day* of the week, and when the doors were shut where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace *be* unto you. 20 And when he had said this, he showed unto them his hands and his side. The disciples therefore were glad, when they saw the Lord. 21 Jesus therefore said to them again, Peace *be* unto you: as the Father hath sent me, even so send I you. 22 And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Spirit: 23 whose soever sins ye forgive, they are forgiven unto them; whose soever *sins* ye retain, they are retained.

24 But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. 25 The

25 The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe.

26 ¶ And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thom'as with them: *then* came Je'sus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace *be* unto you.

27 Then saith he to Thom'as, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust *it* into my side: and be not faithless, but believing.

28 And Thom'as answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God.

29 Je'sus saith unto him, Thom'as, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed *are* they that have not seen, and *yet* have believed.

30 ¶ And many other signs truly did Je'sus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book:

31 But these are written, that ye might believe that Je'sus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.

other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe.

26 And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them. Jesus cometh, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace *be* unto you. 27 Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and see my hands; and reach *hither* thy hand, and put it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing. 28 Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God. 29 Jesus saith unto him, Because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed *are* they that have not seen, and *yet* have believed.

30 Many other signs therefore did Jesus in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book: 31 but these are written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye may have life in his name.

The Time—A.D. 30. **The Place**—Jerusalem.

DAILY HOME READINGS

Date	Title	Reference
Monday, April 10	The Empty Tomb	John 20 : 1-10.
Tuesday, April 11	Jesus Appears to Mary	John 20 : 11-18.
Wednesday, April 12	Jesus Appears to the Ten	John 20 : 19-23.
Thursday, April 13	Jesus and Thomas	John 20 : 24-31.
Friday, April 14	Jesus Appears in Galilee	John 21 : 1-8.
Saturday, April 15	Jesus and Seven Disciples	John 21 : 9-14.
Sunday, April 16	Jehovah Our Deliverer	Psalm 16.

DIFFICULT WORDS AND PHRASES

19. The doors were shut. The body of Jesus was the same and yet not the same. He now possessed a spiritual body. See Luke 24 : 3, 36-39, 51.

22. Breathed on them. The Greek word for "spirit" and that for "breath" are the same. The Holy Spirit was vitally related to Jesus.

23. Whose soever sins ye forgive. This includes and takes for granted the use of all the means given to ministers of the gospel in their work, such as preaching, prayer, baptism, and the ministry of the Word.

26. After eight days. The first Easter Day was Sunday, the first day of the week. Eight days later would be the second Sunday.

28. My Lord and my God. The earliest Apostles' Creed. The confession of Thomas. It is the climax of the Gospel.

THE EASTER STORY

The regular lesson in the course of studies in Old Testament history is replaced by the Easter lesson. The story is taken from the close of the Gospel of John and is one of the most interesting accounts in the Gospels. It concerns the doubt and faith of Thomas. The apostle John wrote his Gospel to prove that Jesus was indeed the Christ, the Son of God, the Saviour of men. That purpose is definitely expressed in the closing verses of our lesson. His Gospel is one continual record of witnesses testifying to the fact of Jesus' divine mission. The last witness is Thomas, one of the Twelve. He had seen Jesus die on the cross. He had seen the nails driven through his hands and feet. He had seen the spear thrust into his side. He had seen his body laid away in the tomb. His faith had died and he thought that he could not believe again in a living Christ. But he did believe because he saw Jesus living again and loving his disciples as before, and his faith expressed itself in the words, "My Lord and my God." If Thomas was led to believe, after his expression of doubt, it is the highest evidence that something had happened. Something had indeed happened and that something was the resurrection.

THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK

John 20 : 19

The story of what happened early Sunday morning is very familiar. Long before it was day,

Jesus had risen from the dead. When the women came to anoint his body, they found there was no need. They found the great stone rolled away, and the tomb empty. Jesus had risen from the dead. Good news travels fast, and from lip to lip and from heart to heart, the glad tidings passed and by the evening of Sunday, the first Easter Day, the Eleven had been made glad by the wonderful tidings. The women had seen him. Even Peter had believed him and had been forgiven, and now in the evening the disciples had met to talk over what had happened. They probably gathered in the same upper room where Jesus had met with them on the night before he was crucified. What memories would fill their hearts! If he was alive, perhaps he would come again. He would know where to find them. They met behind closed doors "for fear of the Jews." The news of the empty tomb had traveled fast and the disciples would be charged with stealing the body of Jesus.

Suddenly they were conscious that Some One had come. The doors were all tightly barred, but there before their eyes stood Jesus who greeted them with the customary Jewish greeting, "Peace be unto you." They knew him at once. It was his face, his voice, his hands. They asked no questions as to how he had entered. He was the same, and yet he was not the same. His body had been glorified, and he was no longer subject to the laws that controlled him in the days of his flesh. This was the first Easter service, the first Christian Sunday, and in the midst of his disciples stood the risen Christ.

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A ROCK TOMB IN A GARDEN

THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

John 20 : 20-23

It was natural for Jesus to assume his old place at the head of the disciples. His first act was to prove that it was really he, himself. We identify people who have been lost or killed by old marks on their bodies, and Jesus held out his hands and showed them where the nails had pierced them. Then he showed them where the soldier's spear had pierced his side. They had seen it all happen and they knew. Perhaps there was something about the appearance of Jesus that made it necessary for him to prove beyond the shadow of a doubt that it was he, and with the same body. When he had finished, the disciples were filled with joy. "The disciples therefore were glad, when they saw the Lord."

The burden of doubt was lifted from the hearts of the disciples, and the shadow of fear was driven away when Jesus said, "Peace be unto you." With him they were not afraid. Even death had had no power over him. He had slipped out of the hands of his enemies and of death itself. Why should they fear? This, too, should be our confidence. The Christian life is a fearless life.

Jesus, however, had come not merely to convince them of his resurrection, and to quicken their hearts, but to send them forth with the gospel message. "As the Father hath sent me, even so send I you." They were to do in the world what he had done. His earthly ministry was ended. Theirs was just beginning. He was about to leave his earthly work. They were to carry it on. They were to finish the work he had begun and tell the gospel story to all the world.

It was a difficult work to which he called them, but they were not to go alone. He would go with them. His promise was, "Lo, I am with you always." This is what he meant by breathing upon them and saying, "Receive ye the Holy Spirit." Jesus would, as it were, put his Spirit within them. He would give himself to them in this spiritual way, and they would carry on his work of forgiveness and salvation in his behalf. They were to be Christians, that is, they were to be representatives of Christ.

This was their commission from their divine Lord and Master.

THE ABSENT APOSTLE

John 20 : 24, 25

We are not told how many were in the upper room when Jesus appeared, but we are told that one of the apostles was absent. For some reason or other Thomas was not present. Perhaps he was busy, or absent from the city, or was so completely upset by what had taken place at Calvary that he had returned to his home, determined to have nothing more to do with the followers of Jesus.

When he was told what had taken place on Sunday evening he refused to believe that they had seen Jesus. When they affirmed that they had seen the Lord he said, "Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe." Thomas had missed the blessing which the other disciples had received. He missed Jesus by being absent from the service of worship and prayer. We never know what blessings we miss when we are absent from the Sunday services. Jesus reveals himself to his worshiping people, and lest we miss him we should not remain away.

We are glad, however, that Thomas so emphatically expressed his doubt. Others besides Thomas have doubted and it helps all of us to know that this good man, with all his honest doubts, was convinced. Doubt is not wrong. That which is wrong is when we refuse to see the truth and to accept it.

THE SECOND EASTER SUNDAY

John 20 : 26-29

Jesus does not pass us by without giving us every opportunity to believe, and he gave Thomas another chance. The following Sunday the disciples were gathered again in the same room, and this time Thomas was there. He was not willing to miss Jesus and perhaps he would come again. And he did come. He came as he did before in spite of the closed doors. When he came, he came to a group that believed, but he spoke to the one unbeliever. To Thomas he said, "Reach hither thy finger, and see my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and put it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing." Jesus gave Thomas his wish, and Thomas was satisfied. One glance into his face, one word from his lips, one sight of his wounded hands and side convinced him that it was Jesus who was with him. He no longer disbelieved but openly confessed him by saying, "My Lord and my God." To him now, and forever, Jesus was his divine Lord and Master.

Perhaps you say, "If I could have seen what Thomas saw, it would be easy to believe." This is not the way Jesus thought. Thomas refused to have faith without seeing and hearing and touching and knowing, but there would be millions who could never see what Thomas saw. Jesus said, "Because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." Those who trust Jesus have the joy of believing in him not because of what they see with their eyes, but because of the love that is in their hearts.

"The astronomer said, 'I have swept the heavens with my telescope, and I have not found God.' He looked for God as for a star, and could not find him. A voice spoke from those heavens which the astronomer did not hear, and it said, 'Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.' And thousands upon thousands of trustful souls who would never look for God through a telescope have found him with their hearts, and they face the fight of life every day bravely, knowing that he goes down to the battle with them; they lie down to rest at night feeling there is One who neither slumbers nor sleeps; if they are out in the raging tempest they sing, 'The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms'; if they go through places of danger and terror they hear a voice say, 'When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee'; and while the learned astronomer says he cannot find God, these simple souls say, ' 'Tis blessed to believe.' "

JESUS IS THE CHRIST

John 20 : 30, 31

The book of John seems to end with the last verses of ch. 20. The last chapter was added later, but the main purpose of the book was finished with ch. 20.

The purpose John had in mind was to prove that Jesus is the Christ. He does this by gathering up all the evidence and hearing all the witnesses. He brings forth the evidence of John the Baptist, of Nicodemus, of the Samaritan woman, of the Greeks who came to see Jesus, of his miracles, and his own words. He calls his enemies to bear witness and he calls his friends. The last witness called is Thomas, who at first would not believe that Jesus was the Christ because he had died upon the cross, but who later confessed that he was both Lord and God because he had risen from the dead. When John had presented the wonderful witness of Thomas his work was done and he closed his book with the words which express his purpose and his plan. "Many other signs therefore did Jesus in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye may have life in his name." John 20: 30, 31.

The Gospels contain all that we need to lead us to faith in Jesus. We are told there that he lived and died and rose and lives again, and if we will trust him our hearts will soon tell us, and our lives will soon tell others, that Jesus is indeed our present and living Saviour.

A LESSON HYMN

This beautiful hymn which was written by Dr. Ray Palmer expresses the true and deepest thought of the lesson.

Jesus, these eyes have never seen
That radiant form of thine;
The veil of sense hangs dark between
Thy blessed face and mine.

I see thee not, I hear thee not,
Yet are thou oft with me;
And earth hath ne'er so dear a spot
As where I meet with thee.

Like some bright dream that comes unsought,
When slumbers o'er me roll,
Thine image ever fills my thought,
And charms my ravished soul.

Yet though I have not seen, and still
Must rest in faith alone;
I love thee, dearest Lord, and will,
Unseen, but not unknown.

When death these mortal eyes shall seal,
And still this throbbing heart,
The rending veil shall thee reveal,
All glorious as thou art.

FOR INTERMEDIATE PUPILS

1. Why do Christians keep Sunday as the Sabbath?
2. What caused the doubt of Thomas?
3. What message did Jesus give to the disciples?
4. What led Thomas to believe in the resurrection?
5. Upon what do we base our faith in the resurrection of Jesus?
6. What is the result of true faith?

The Intermediate Catechism

Q. 22. What is the work of the Holy Spirit in us who believe?

A. The work of the Holy Spirit in us who believe is to give us hatred of sin and love of righteousness, knowledge of the truth, power for service, and assurance that we are children of God.

FOR SENIOR STUDENTS

1. Why did the disciples meet behind closed doors?
2. How could Jesus enter a room when the doors were barred?
3. Why did Jesus meet with the disciples after his resurrection?
4. Why was Thomas unwilling to believe in the resurrection?
5. What is the difference between sight and faith? How did Jesus value each?
6. What is the value to us of the doubt and faith of Thomas?

The Shorter Catechism

Q. 69. What is forbidden in the sixth commandment?

A. The sixth commandment forbiddeth the taking away of our own life, or the life of our neighbor unjustly, or whatsoever tendeth thereunto.

Lesson IV—UZZIAH'S PRIDE AND PUNISHMENT

**THE GOLDEN TEXT—"Pride goeth before destruction,
And a haughty spirit before a fall."
—Prov. 16: 18.**

TEXT OF LESSON, II Chron. 26: 3-5, 15-21

For entire lesson, see II Chron. 26: 1-21

COMMON VERSION

3 Sixteen years old *was* Uz-zi'ah when he began to reign, and he reigned fifty and two years in Je-ru'sa-lem. His mother's name also *was* Jec-o-li'ah of Je-ru'sa-lem.

4 And he did *that which was* right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father Am-a-zi'ah did.

5 And he sought God in the days of Zech-a-ri'ah, who had understanding in the visions of God: and as long as he sought the LORD, God made him to prosper.

* * * * *

15 And he made in Je-ru'sa-lem engines, in-

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3 Sixteen years old was Uzziah when he began to reign; and he reigned fifty and two years in Jerusalem: and his mother's name was Jechiliah, of Jerusalem. 4 And he did that which was right in the eyes of Jehovah, according to all that his father Amaziah had done. 5 And he set himself to seek God in the days of Zechariah, who had understanding in the vision of God: and as long as he sought Jehovah, God made him to prosper.

* * * * *

15 And he made in Jerusalem engines, invented by skilful men, to be on the towers and upon the

vented by cunning men, to be on the towers and upon the bulwarks, to shoot arrows and great stones withal. And his name spread far abroad; for he was marvellously helped, till he was strong.

16 ¶ But when he was strong, his heart was lifted up to *his* destruction: for he transgressed against the LORD his God, and went into the temple of the LORD to burn incense upon the altar of incense.

17 And Az-a-ri'ah the priest went in after him, and with him fourscore priests of the LORD, *that were* valiant men:

18 And they withstood Uz-zi'ah the king, and said unto him, *It appertaineth* not unto thee, Uzzi'ah, to burn incense unto the LORD, but to the priests the sons of Aa'ron, that are consecrated to burn incense: go out of the sanctuary; for thou hast trespassed; neither *shall it be* for thine honour from the LORD God.

19 Then Uz-zi'ah was wroth, and *had* a censer in his hand to burn incense: and while he was wroth with the priests, the leprosy even rose up in his forehead before the priests in the house of the LORD, from beside the incense altar.

20 And Az-a-ri'ah the chief priest, and all the priests, looked upon him, and, behold, he *was* leprous in his forehead, and they thrust him out from thence; yea, himself hasted also to go out, because the LORD had smitten him.

21 And Uz-zi'ah the king was a leper unto the day of his death, and dwelt in a several house, *being* a leper; for he was cut off from the house of the LORD: and Jo'tham his son *was* over the king's house, judging the people of the land.

battlements, wherewith to shoot arrows and great stones. And his name spread far abroad; for he was marvellously helped, till he was strong.

16 But when he was strong, his heart was lifted up, so that he did corruptly, and he trespassed against Jehovah his God; for he went into the temple of Jehovah to burn incense upon the altar of incense. 17 And Azariah the priest went in after him, and with him fourscore priests of Jehovah, that were valiant men: 18 and they withstood Uzziah the king, and said unto him, It pertaineth not unto thee, Uzziah, to burn incense unto Jehovah, but to the priests the sons of Aaron, that are consecrated to burn incense: go out of the sanctuary; for thou hast trespassed; neither shall it be for thine honor from Jehovah God. 19 Then Uzziah was wroth; and he had a censer in his hand to burn incense; and while he was wroth with the priests, the leprosy brake forth in his forehead before the priests in the house of Jehovah, beside the altar of incense. 20 And Azariah the chief priest, and all the priests, looked upon him, and, behold, he was leprous in his forehead, and they thrust him out quickly from thence; yea, himself hasted also to go out, because Jehovah had smitten him. 21 And Uzziah the king was a leper unto the day of his death, and dwelt in a separate house, being a leper; for he was cut off from the house of Jehovah: and Jotham his son was over the king's house, judging the people of the land.

The Time—786 B.C. to 735 B.C. **The Place**—Jerusalem.

DAILY HOME READINGS

Date	Title	Reference
Monday, April 17	A Godly King	II Chron. 26 : 1-10.
Tuesday, April 18	Pride and Punishment	II Chron. 26 : 11-21.
Wednesday, April 19	The Story Retold	II Kings 15 : 1-7.
Thursday, April 20	Deceived Through Drink	Prov. 20 : 1-11.
Friday, April 21	Warning Against Pride	Deut. 8 : 11-20.
Saturday, April 22	A Covetous Servant Punished	II Kings 5 : 20-27.
Sunday, April 23	The Grace of Humility	Prov. 16 : 18-25.

DIFFICULT WORDS AND PHRASES

3. Uzziah. Called Azariah in II Kings 15 : 1-7. He was the son of King Amaziah, and grandson of Joash.

5. Zechariah. See margin. "Who gave instruction in the seeing of God." A prophet of importance but not mentioned elsewhere.

15. Great stones. The machines which threw great stones were like the Roman catapults. These engines of war were the first artillery.

17. Azariah. The high priest. He had courage to oppose the king. See I Chron. 6 : 10.

21. In a separate house. Margin, "Infirmary." He was separated from the people, perhaps deposed from the throne. Jotham appears to have been regent for his father for about fifteen years.

UZZIAH THE KING

II Chron. 26 : 3

Uzziah was one of the great kings of Judah. He began to reign when he was sixteen years of age, and he was king for fifty-two years. This would make him a man of sixty-eight years when he died. He was the grandson of Joash, about whom we studied in the lesson preceding Easter. He is called by two names. In II Kings 15 : 1-7 he is called Azariah. Azariah means "Jehovah hath helped." In Chronicles and in Isaiah he is called Uzziah, which means, "might of Jehovah." It may be that the name Uzziah was given him when he became king, or it may have been given him to avoid confusion with the name of the high priest, whose name also was Azariah. The king was a

man who honored God in all his ways, and did that which was right. He was one of the greatest monarchs in Hebrew history during the first part of his reign. He must have been to the boys and girls of that time what Queen Victoria was to thousands of people in the British Empire. They had never known any other ruler. And he was as good as he was great, and might have had a glorious reign had he not committed the sin that resulted so disastrously.

THE CHARACTER OF UZZIAH

II Chron. 26 : 4, 5

This story of Uzziah is told in a few sentences, yet it covers one of the greatest periods in the history of God's people. Uzziah was true to God during the first part of his life, but at the last suffered for his sin. It is said of him that "he did that which was right in the eyes of Jehovah, according to all that his father Amaziah had done. And he set himself to seek God in the days of Zechariah, who had understanding in the vision of God: and as long as he sought Jehovah, God made him to prosper." We do not know anything about Zechariah, the priest, but evidently he had a great and good influence upon the king, and as long as Uzziah was true to God, he prospered and things went well with the nation.

Sometimes we are apt to think that prosperity is not a reward for right living. It often happens that loyalty to God is not rewarded by worldly success. Paul found only sacrifice and at last death as his reward. Livingstone died a poor man in Africa. The reward, however, comes in other ways. Virtue is its own reward. We do not need to be rewarded with prosperity for being loyal and true to God.

On the other hand, it is true that "godliness is profitable for all things." The path to true success in business is the path of honor, of loyalty to men and God. J. Pierpont Morgan testified openly that character is a business man's greatest asset.

NATIONAL GREATNESS

II Chron. 26 : 15

The verses between v. 5 and v. 15 are interesting and should be read. They tell a story of military success and glory. The Kingdom of Judah under Uzziah grew powerful and strong. He recovered and fortified the town of Eloth on the Gulf of Akabah. "His name spread abroad even to the entrance of Egypt." He took Gath and Ashdod and subdued the Philistines. He drove out the Arabs and suppressed their plundering raids. He made the tribes beyond Jordan pay tribute to Judah, and within the nation itself he "built towers, strengthened the walls of Jerusalem at its weakest points, provided catapults, and other instruments of war, and rendered a permanent benefit to Jerusalem by irrigation and the storing of rain water in tanks." He extended the boundaries of the nation, and even to-day upon the monuments of Assyria his name is written. It is interesting to read about the novel artillery he introduced. "He made in Jerusalem engines, invented by skilful men, to be on the towers and upon the battlements, wherewith to shoot arrows and great stones. And his name spread far abroad; for he was marvellously helped, till he was strong." These of course were simple engines of war compared to the machine guns and howitzers of our day, but they were powerful engines of defense nevertheless.

THE SIN OF THE KING

II Chron. 26 : 16

During the greater part of his reign Uzziah remained true and loyal to God. He was great and powerful, but his greatness became a temptation to him. The story of his latter years is very tragic. "When he was strong, his heart was lifted up, so that he did corruptly, and he trespassed against Jehovah his God; for he went into the temple of Jehovah to burn incense upon the altar of incense."

According to the law of Moses the duty of offering incense in the Temple was restricted to the sons of Aaron. We read in Numbers, "And Eleazar the priest took the brazen censers, which they that were burnt had offered; and they beat them out for a covering of the altar, to be a memorial unto the children of Israel, to the end that no stranger, that is not of the seed of Aaron, come near to burn incense before Jehovah; that he be not as Korah, and as his company: as Jehovah spake unto him by Moses." Uzziah was so confident of his authority and so accustomed to power that he thought that even in the Temple he was supreme, and then he attempted to do what was properly done by the priests only. He so far forgot himself that he "went into the temple of Jehovah to burn incense upon the altar of incense."

He was guilty not only of disobedience but also of irreverence. There are some things which it is well for us to remember, and one is that reverence is priceless and easily lost. In a recent sermon on "reverence" one of our ministers said: "Whenever you find life at its best you will always discover this fine spirit of reverence. You will behold life covering its face with its wings and crying: 'Holy, Holy, Holy, is Jehovah of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.' You will find it saying, even in solitude and in the desert, 'Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.' And wherever you find life at its lowest you will miss this consecrating quality. You will discover a boastful knowledge, an irreverent and unholy conceit. You will find that there is no hush of heart, no bowing of the head, no spirit of wonder and of worship, no sense of the sacredness of life, which is the expression of reverence and the recognition of the presence of Deity."

THE KING OPPOSED

II Chron. 26 : 17, 18

The king was not allowed to carry out his intention. He might have supreme power in the nation, but in the Temple of God he had no more place or power than the humblest worshiper. Once when the Duke of Wellington knelt at the altar to receive the sacrament, a poor and humble woman came and knelt at his side. Some one resented her kneeling so near the duke, but Wellington said, "We are all equal here." Before God there are neither dukes nor kings. God dwells in the humble and the contrite heart.

When the king entered the Temple to offer incense Azariah opposed him, and with eighty other priests, took his place in the Temple, determined that even if force was required the king would not be allowed to have his way and break the law of God. It was a bold stand to make. We know little of Azariah, but this act alone singles him out as a brave and courageous man. The priests barred the way to the altar and, standing out against the king whom he had loved and honored for years, Azariah the priest said, "It pertaineth not unto thee, Uzziah, to burn incense unto Jehovah, but to the priests the sons of Aaron, that are consecrated to burn incense: go out of the sanctuary; for thou hast trespassed; neither shall it be for thine honour from Jehovah God." Just as John Knox opposed Mary Queen of Scots, and as Latimer opposed the king of England, so did Azariah oppose Uzziah for his attempt to do that for which he had neither the fitness nor the right, that which God had forbidden.

By permission of Rev. John Harvey Lee

ENTRANCE TO THE TOMB OF THE KINGS

THE JUDGMENT OF GOD

II Chron. 26 : 19, 20

When Uzziah saw the opposition of the priests and heard the stinging rebuke of Azariah, the high priest, he was angry and determined to go on with his purpose to burn incense upon the altar.

There was a moment of suspense. No one knew what would happen, when suddenly all in the Temple were made speechless with terror, for upon the forehead of Uzziah there appeared the sure mark of leprosy. The sign was unmistakable, and as Azariah came forward and looked upon the king he knew that Uzziah was a leper.

Leprosy was of course an unclean disease, and the presence of a leper in the Temple was unthinkable, and so the priests made haste to rid the Temple of his presence. Even Uzziah himself, knowing that the judgment of God had laid hold on him, hastened to leave the holy place. It was a terrible punishment and a sad ending to a great life and a brilliant reign. How often men who begin well, end in disaster. We think of Saul and Solomon and Judas. They began well, but they ended by forgetting God. How different was the life of Paul. He began badly. He began as a persecutor, but before his death he said, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith." It is good to make a good start. It is better to make a good finish.

THE LAST DAYS OF UZZIAH

The concluding years of the life of Uzziah were lived in loneliness and disgrace. After a long and wonderful career he was set aside and his son Jotham reigned in his stead. Instead of living in the palace in royal estate, he lived in a "separate house." He was placed in an infirmary, or what we would call to-day an "isolation hospital" because he was a leper, and leprosy was both unclean

and contagious. The law of the Jews required that lepers be kept separate. Lev. 13: 46; Num. 5: 2.

The sin of Uzziah is set before us very clearly. The lesson tells us that Uzziah was true to God when he was strong. "He was marvellously helped, till he was strong." When he became strong and powerful he forgot God. "His heart was lifted up, so that he did corruptly, and he trespassed against Jehovah his God." It is a story that can find illustration in many pages of history. It is strength, not weakness, that tempts men and nations. When Germany was weak and struggling she was true to God, but when she grew great and prosperous she forgot God and trusted in the sword. It is true of the Church. When the Church was poor and persecuted she grew and prospered. When she became powerful and rich, she lost her power. It is true of persons. Strength is our temptation.

UZZIAH AND MODERN HISTORY

Andrew Melville was a minister in Scotland when King James VI of Scotland and I of England was in power. "The king was but a boy when Melville was building up a strong and independent Church, and when he became a man, and so had more influence, he set himself with all his might to undo that good work. So began a fight that lasted for many a year. We may say that the gauntlet was flung down in Falkland Palace in 1596. That is perhaps the most memorable scene in Melville's life. We see him catching his royal master by the sleeve, calling him 'God's sillie vassal,' and uttering words such as a subject has seldom dared to speak to a monarch, words that still stir us like a battle cry: 'I maun tell you, there are two kings and two kingdoms in Scotland. There is Christ Jesus the King, and his Kingdom the Kirk—whose subject King James the Saxt is, and of whose kingdom not a king nor a lord nor a head, but a member.' We are not surprised that when James became king of England as well as of Scotland, and felt his power to be greater than in the little realm of the North, he determined to pay Melville back for these bold words. So he called him up to London, tried in vain to bend or break him, had him confined in the Tower for four years, and only set him at liberty on condition that he never set foot in Scotland again." Later in life Melville said: "The earth is the Lord's, and my fatherland is where ever well-doing is. God be glorified! It is not in the power of man to hang or exile his truth."

FOR INTERMEDIATE PUPILS

1. How long did Uzziah reign?
2. Would you call Uzziah's reign successful?
3. How was Uzziah led into sin?
4. Why did the priests oppose Uzziah?
5. How did God show his disapproval of Uzziah?
6. Does the **Golden Text** explain the later life of Uzziah? Explain how.

The Intermediate Catechism

Q. 23. What is the duty and privilege of those who believe on Jesus Christ?

A. The duty and privilege of those who believe on Jesus Christ is to confess him before men and to come into the full communion of the Church.

FOR SENIOR STUDENTS

1. Why was Uzziah one of Judah's great kings?
2. What sin did Uzziah commit?
3. Was Azariah a man of courage? Why?
4. Why did Uzziah leave the Temple of his own free will?
5. Give examples of men who have sinned because of their power.
6. Give examples of nations who have been ruined because of greatness.

The Shorter Catechism

Q. 70. Which is the seventh commandment?

A. The seventh commandment is, Thou shalt not commit adultery.

Q. 71. What is required in the seventh commandment?

A. The seventh commandment requireth the preservation of our own and our neighbor's chastity, in heart, speech, and behavior.

Q. 72. What is forbidden in the seventh commandment?

A. The seventh commandment forbiddeth all unchaste thoughts, words, and actions.

Lesson V—ISAIAH'S SUMMONS AND RESPONSE

THE GOLDEN TEXT—"Here am I; send me."—Isa. 6: 8.

TEXT OF LESSON, Isa. 6: 1-8

For entire lesson, see Isa., ch. 6

COMMON VERSION

1 In the year that king Uz-zi'ah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple.

AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE

1 In the year that king Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and his train filled the temple. 2 Above him stood

2 Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly.

3 And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, *is* the LORD of hosts: the whole earth *is* full of his glory.

4 And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke.

5 ¶ Then said I, Woe *is* me! for I am undone; because I *am* a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.

6 Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, *which* he had taken with the tongs from off the altar:

7 And he laid *it* upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged.

8 Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here *am* I; send me.

the seraphim: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. 3 And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is Jehovah of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. 4 And the foundations of the thresholds shook at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. 5 Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, Jehovah of hosts.

6 Then flew one of the seraphim unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: 7 and he touched my mouth with it, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin forgiven. 8 And I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then I said, Here am I; send me.

The Time—735 B.C. **The Places**—Jerusalem or Judah.

DAILY HOME READINGS

Date	Title	Reference
Monday, April 24	God Calls Isaiah	Isa., ch. 6.
Tuesday, April 25	God Calls Abram	Gen. 12 : 1-9.
Wednesday, April 26	God Calls Moses	Ex. 3 : 1-12.
Thursday, April 27	God Calls Joshua	Josh. 1 : 1-9.
Friday, April 28	God Calls Jeremiah	Jer. 1 : 4-19.
Saturday, April 29	Jesus Calls His Disciples	Matt. 10 : 1-15.
Sunday, April 30	God's Help and Blessing	Psalm 67.

DIFFICULT WORDS AND PHRASES

1. Uzziah died. 735 B.C. For about fifteen years he had been a leper. His reign lasted fifty-two years.

2. The seraphim. Supernatural beings. According to some authorities, from a word meaning "to burn," perhaps referring to their glorious appearance.

3. Holy, Holy, Holy. The threefold repetition means intense feeling. God is the Holy One.

4. Smoke. A symbol of the presence of God. See Ex. 19 : 9, 18; I Kings 8 : 10, 11.

6. Live coal. Fire is the symbol of cleansing and purity. Mal. 3 : 2; Matt. 3 : 11.

8. For us. The plural is often used by God. See Gen. 1 : 26; 3 : 22. The idea may be that God consults with those about his throne. It may suggest the Trinity.

ISAIAH'S VISION OF GOD

Isa. 6 : 1

Isaiah was a young man, probably of noble birth. He had thought long and deeply about the problems and conditions of the nation. Isaiah had never known another king. All through his life Uzziah had been king. And now the king was dead. And he had had such a strange death. For about fifteen years the king had been a leper, and had lived alone as lepers were required to live. Our lesson last week told the story of how he became a leper. It was by the hand of God as a punishment for his sin.

Isaiah had gone to the Temple to worship. The services were just the usual services, and everyone thought there was nothing out of the ordinary, but one young man saw the Lord. Isaiah in a vision saw the throne "high and lifted up." It was not empty even though Uzziah was dead. Some One occupied the throne. It was God, himself. "In the year that king Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and his train filled the temple."

This was the way in which Isaiah was taught that God, not Uzziah, was the real King of Judah. Kings may come and go, but God remains. Isaiah had often attended the Temple services, but this day God appeared to him. We, too, should always be expectant when worshiping. Perhaps, in some real way, God may speak to us, and to us only.

THE SERAPHIM

Isa. 6 : 2

There is no description of God although we are told that Isaiah saw "the Lord." He does not at-

tempt to tell us what he was like. Indeed no man can see God and live. Isaiah tells us how the vision impressed him.

The Lord occupied the throne. Above the throne were the seraphim, but all we are told about them is that "each one had six wings." They were supernatural beings clothed with power, the symbols of perfect life and power. They are what all true life should be. Their wings represent their character. Two wings were used to cover the face. This was an act of reverence. They did not dare to look upon the thrice-holy God. True life is always reverent. Linnæus, the flower lover, once said that he saw God in the opening of a flower and he bowed his head and worshiped. That is reverence. With two wings each seraph covered his feet. This was an act of humility. In the presence of God all life is humble. He is high and lifted up; therefore, it becomes us who dwell upon the earth, to be of a humble and a contrite heart. Two wings were used for flight. They were for service. Like the angels of God they flew quickly on errands of mercy for the Lord God Almighty. They were servants of God Most High. These, then, were the messages of the seraphim to Isaiah, reverence, humility, service. If we are to be near God, we, too, must be reverent, humble, and obedient.

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

Isa. 6 : 3, 4

Isaiah's eyes had seen, but now his ears were to hear. The music of the Temple faded away. Just as the thought of the dead king disappeared and in its place came the vision of God, so the music of the Temple priests died away and in its place came the music of the seraphim. The music of the Temple was antiphonal, or, as we would say, responsive, so Isaiah heard the heavenly choir singing as it were one to another. "One cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is Jehovah of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory." It is from words like these, found in Rev. 4: 8-11, that one of our most beautiful hymns received its inspiration.

"Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty!
Early in the morning our song shall rise to thee;
Holy, Holy, Holy! Merciful and mighty!
God in three persons, blessed Trinity!

"Holy, Holy, Holy! All the saints adore thee,
Casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea;
Cherubim and seraphim falling down before thee,
Who wert, and art, and evermore shalt be."

We know how at times we are overcome with music, so Isaiah as he heard the song of the seraphim felt the very foundations of the Temple rock, and the whole place was filled as it were with smoke like incense, the symbol that God's presence filled the sanctuary.

A VISION OF SELF

Isa. 6 : 5

When Isaiah saw God, he saw himself. He had gone up to the Temple feeling perhaps that he, and he alone, was conscious of the sinful condition of his people. But when he saw God, and heard the seraphim sing of God's holiness, he felt that he, himself, was unfit to behold the purity of the holy God. He drew away as if from a sacred place and said, "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, Jehovah of hosts."

This is the path all tread who come into the presence of the thrice-holy One. When Peter's eyes were opened and he knew Jesus in his power and purity he said, "Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord." When Jesus was revealed to John on the Isle of Patmos, the apostle fell at his feet as if dead. When God came to Job, the patriarch cried out,

"I had heard of thee by the hearing of the ear;
But now mine eye seeth thee:
Wherefore I abhor myself,
And repent in dust and ashes."

When Judas was in the presence of Jesus he was ill at ease and he arose and sought relief by fleeing from the upper room.

"And none, O Lord, have perfect rest,
For none are wholly free from sin;
And they who fain would serve thee best
Are conscious most of wrong within."

The first step in preparation for service is a right estimate of oneself. Before God could use Isaiah, he must be made to feel his need of God. This is what Paul meant when he said that when he was weak, he was strong. When Uzziah became strong he forgot God. When Isaiah became conscious of his weakness he laid hold upon God's strength.

THE GIFT OF SALVATION

Isa. 6 : 6-8

The cry of penitence always brings the gift of forgiveness and peace. There was no time between Isaiah's cry, "Woe is me!" and the coming of the seraph. Quick as the light, one of the seraphim flew with a live coal taken from the Temple altar, and touching the lips of the young man said, "Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin forgiven." Isaiah had said that he was a man of unclean lips, and by the touching of his lips with a glowing coal, the

seraph pronounced his lips and words pure. It is the purpose of fire to cleanse and purify. We sing,

"Come as the fire; and purge our hearts,
Like sacrificial flame."

We must not lose sight of the fact that Isaiah's mission in life was to be a prophet. He was to speak for God. His lips were to be the instrument of God through which he would serve, and so his lips and language were purified and consecrated to the holy task. This is Isaiah's dedication to his life work.

There is also another possible point of view and explanation, and it is presented in these words of Dr. James Stalker. "It appears to me that up to this time profanity of language had been Isaiah's besetting sin. I should think that few will doubt that, when he says, 'I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips,' he means to refer to a prevalence of profanity amongst his companions. Well, is it not the most natural explanation to believe that he had in his previous life given way to that sin, and now that is the sin that burns on his conscience? I have more than once known this particular form of sin to be killed outright in one day; and whereas there are other besetting sins which, even when a man has been pardoned, cling to him for a lifetime, often this one is got quit of in one hour, and never comes back again."

THE CALL TO SERVICE

Isa. 6 : 8

This chapter really contains Isaiah's call to become a prophet. We would expect it to be ch. 1 instead of ch. 6. God needed Isaiah and he had carefully prepared him for service. His soul was on fire because of the evils which threatened the nation. He was a true patriot, but before he could go forth as a herald of righteousness, he must first be called and furnished for service. He received a vision of God, a revelation of sin, a message of salvation to his own soul, and then he heard God's call, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" That is the way God calls men. We may not hear his voice as we hear the voice of our friends, but deep down in our hearts we hear and we understand. There was work to do out in the nation. There were men to save and people to guide, and God needed a man. In answer to that call, Isaiah answered: "Here am I; send me." It was his response to God's call, and in answering that call he became one of the world's greatest missionaries and servants. In our next lesson we will study something more about his work and mission in the world. Isaiah stood on the threshold of his life work, with youth and ambition and talent and high purpose in his possession, and, hearing all and seeing all, he stood upon his feet and cried, "Here am I; send me." And God sent him. God sent that young man, single-handed and alone, out into the nation until his voice was heard in the lanes and streets of his native land, and men and women looked up from their selfish pleasure, saw him and heard his message, and followed along the path of service and duty and worship. It is wonderful what God can do through one young man, and it may be that some one of you will make this same response to the call which is as personal for you as it was for Isaiah and say, "Here am I; send me."

SERVICE THE TEST OF LIFE

A recent writer has said: "I am firmly convinced that the fifteen years which are before us are to be years of construction and not of criticism; when positive contribution shall be made to the building up of the Kingdom of God in the life of our people. Truly these are great days, and again as of old, our Lord is passing along the path of life and the question we are asking of him is, 'Whither goest thou?' and we know that his answer is ever the same. He is always bearing his cross, going forth to serve."

" 'Where the many toil together, there am I among my own;
Where the tired workman sleepeth, there am I with him alone.

" 'I, the Peace that passeth knowledge, dwell amid the daily strife;
I, the Bread of heaven, am broken in the sacrament of life.

. . . . . .

" 'Nevermore thou needest seek me; I am with thee everywhere;
Raise the stone, and thou shalt find me; cleave the wood, and I am there.'"

And to each of us, in the silence of our own hearts, he asks, "Who will go for us?"

ISAIAH'S FIRST SERMON

This wonderful chapter has been called "Isaiah's first sermon." It has been a constant challenge to the Church for centuries. It has been the missionary appeal which has moved thousands of men and women to offer their lives for foreign service. When the Civil War broke out Frances Willard said, "There is but one voice all over the North and that is, 'Here am I; send me.' When Africa called, Livingstone said, 'Here am I.' When India called, Carey said, 'Here am I.' Bishop Thoburn's experience is becoming universal. He said, "Aye, it was not so much a call to India that I received as an acceptance for India.' So Alexander Duff, the apostle of civilization in India, referring to his acceptance of the call for missionary work, writes: 'There was a time when I had no care nor concern for the heathen. That was the time I had no care for my own soul. But by the grace of God when

I began to care for my own soul, then I began to care for the heathen, too. And in my closet on my bended knee, I said: 'O Lord, thou knowest silver and gold I have none for this cause. What I have, I give; I offer myself; wilt thou accept the gift?' ''

''Let none hear you idly saying,
'There is nothing I can do.'
While the souls of men are dying,
And the Master calls for you:
Take the task he gives you gladly,
Let his work your pleasure be;
Answer quickly when he calleth,
'Here am I; send me, send me.' ''

FOR INTERMEDIATE PUPILS

1. What was the cause of Uzziah's death?
2. What do the wings of the seraphim mean?
3. Why did Isaiah cry, ''Woe is me''?
4. Why did the seraph touch Isaiah's lips?
5. How was Isaiah prepared for service?
6. How can we know when God calls us?

The Intermediate Catechism

Q. 24. Is there more than one Church?

A. There is only one Church, in which all the saved, in heaven and on earth, are included, and of which Jesus Christ is the Head.

Q. 25. What is the Church on earth?

A. The Church on earth is the whole body of those who confess Christ as Lord and Saviour, together with their children.

FOR SENIOR STUDENTS

1. What were the moral conditions of Judah?
2. What had the death of Uzziah to do with the call of Isaiah?
3. Point out the meaning of the wings of the seraphim.
4. Why was Isaiah a man of ''unclean lips''?
5. How was Isaiah prepared for service?
6. When may we, too, say, ''Here am I; send me''?

The Shorter Catechism

Q. 73. Which is the eighth commandment?

A. The eighth commandment is, Thou shalt not steal.

Q. 74. What is required in the eighth commandment?

A. The eighth commandment requireth the lawful procuring and furthering the wealth and outward estate of ourselves and others.

Lesson VI—ISAIAH'S IDEAL FOR A WORLD AT STRIFE

THE GOLDEN TEXT—"Come ye, and let us walk in the light of Jehovah."—Isa. 2: 5.

TEXT OF LESSON, Isa. 2: 2-4; 11: 1-9

COMMON VERSION

2 : 2 And it shall come to pass in the last days, *that* the mountain of the LORD'S house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it.

3 And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Ja'cob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zi'on shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Je-ru'sa-lem.

4 And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

* * * * *

11: 1 And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jes'se, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots:

2 And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD;

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2 : 2 And it shall come to pass in the latter days, that the mountain of Jehovah's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. 3 And many peoples shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem. 4 And he will judge between the nations, and will decide concerning many people; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

* * * * *

11 : 1 And there shall come forth a shoot out of the stock of Jesse, and a branch out of his roots shall bear fruit: 2 and the Spirit of Jehovah shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of Jehovah; 3 and his delight shall be in the fear of Jehovah; and he

3 And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the LORD: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears:

4 But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.

5 And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins.

6 The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them.

7 And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

8 And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den.

9 They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.

shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither decide after the hearing of his ears; 4 but with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. 5 And righteousness shall be the girdle of his waist, and faithfulness the girdle of his loins.

6 And the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. 7 And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. 8 And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den. 9 They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of Jehovah, as the waters cover the sea.

The Time—About 737 B.C. **The Place**—Jerusalem.

DAILY HOME READINGS

Date	Title	Reference
Monday, May 1	The Gathering of the Nations	Isa. 2 : 1-14.
Tuesday, May 2	World-Peace Promised	Isa. 11 : 1-9.
Wednesday, May 3	The Coming of the Prince of Peace	Isa. 9 : 1-7.
Thursday, May 4	The Givers of Peace	Micah 5 : 1-8.
Friday, May 5	The Peacemaker Blessed	Matt. 5 : 1-12.
Saturday, May 6	Purity and Peace	Gal. 5 : 16-25.
Sunday, May 7	God, Our Refuge	Psalm 46.

DIFFICULT WORDS AND PHRASES

Ch. 2: 2. In the latter days. The words mean "In the future." It came to mean "In the days of the Messiah." **On the top of.** Margin, "At the head of." Under the figure of a physical change the supremacy of Jehovah is announced.

3. The law. Margin, "Instruction." The teaching given by priests and prophets of the Old Testament.

Ch. 11: 1. A shoot out of the stock of Jesse. Assyria was like a cedar which when cut down died. Judah was like an oak which when felled sent out from its roots new shoots. Jesse was the father of David. The "stock of Jesse" means the people of Judah.

4. The rod of his mouth. The word of the Messiah shall judge the world. See Isa. 49 : 2; Zech. 9 : 10.

5. The girdle. The girdle is the symbol of readiness. He shall always be ready for righteousness.

8. The adder's den. Probably the great yellow viper still common in Palestine.

THE PURPOSE OF THE LESSON

The verses of the lesson are taken from two different chapters in Isaiah, ch. 2 and ch. 11. The lesson is composed of these two selections, each of which is a separate and distinct gem. The first section from ch. 2 is a poem of perfect beauty. It is found in almost exactly the same words, but with one verse more, in Micah 4 : 1-4. It may be that Micah received his verses from Isaiah or Isaiah received his from Micah. We cannot tell. Micah lived at the same time as Isaiah although he was probably younger. The poem was perhaps well known in Judah and used as a national hymn. The second selection is also a perfect poem. It pictures the coming of the Messiah and his reign of peace and righteousness upon the earth.

The lesson as a whole is a prophecy of the time when the Messiah will be the world's true King. The prophet was speaking of the time when Christ would "reign in righteousness." It is a picture of the Golden Age when war will be done away and all men will live as brothers. We are still dreaming of that time, even after all these years since Christ came, and the Golden Age is not yet because we are not willing to do as Jesus wants us to do. Under his leadership the time will come when war will cease even as slavery has ceased and God alone will be our supreme Judge.

THE CAPITAL OF THE WORLD

Isa. 2 : 2

The prophet draws a picture of the new world that is to be. Above all the hills and all the mountains of the world is to be the house of God. Mount Zion, the mountain of the house of God, is to be at the head of all other high places. This means that God's house is to have the highest place in the world. The religion of Israel is to become supreme, and all other religions are to be subject to it. God is to be first.

In the City of Edinburgh, Scotland, the railroads are down in the lowest level. Then higher up are the parks and gardens. Still higher are the university buildings, and at the very top of the mountain that overlooks the city is the ancient

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PEACE IN PALESTINE

castle, which in the old days protected the city and made it safe.

The castle controlled the life of commerce, of pleasure, of study. In some such way did Israel picture the new world, only instead of a castle at the top, God's house is placed there. The thought and the will of God will guide and control the life of the world.

SERVING THE WORLD

Isa. 2 : 3

The supremacy of Israel's religion and Israel's God did not mean that Israel would rule the world by force. It meant rather that Israel would serve the world. The reign of God would be so wise and good and kind that all other nations would see how much better life would be for them if God were their God. Seeing the benefits that came to Israel from the worship of Jehovah, other nations would say to one another, "Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem."

This is the true way to look at life. We must attract people to our religion and to our law. We cannot force them to believe and accept Jesus as their Saviour, but we can make our own lives, and the life of our nation so beautiful and attractive that other people will wish to know the secret of our happiness. The nation that has the best laws, the truest religion, the finest life, will be the nation that will lead the world.

A WORLD WITHOUT WAR

Isa. 2 : 4

Isaiah said that when God was made supreme in the world war would cease. He would judge between the nations. They would not go to war to settle disputes, for the will of God would decide the matter. When nations are willing to follow the path of love and of service, war will end. War is both cruel and costly. It was said by Henry Richard who gave his life to end war: "Give me the money which has been spent in war, and I will purchase every foot of land on the globe. I will clothe every man, woman, and child in an attire of which kings and queens would be proud; I will build a schoolhouse on every hillside and in every valley over the whole earth; I will build an academy in every town and endow it, a college in every state, and will fill it with able professors; I will crown every hill with a place of worship consecrated to the promulgation of the gospel of peace; I will support in every pulpit an able teacher of righteousness, so that on every Sabbath morning the chime on one hill should answer the chime on another round the world's wide circumference, and the voice of prayer and the song of praise should ascend like a universal offering to heaven."

Isaiah not only saw the end of war; he saw that under the rule and reign of Christ all the strength and courage that went into war will go into better things. "They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks." Dr. Jowett said: "I saw a picture the other day which was intended to represent the reënshrinement of peace. A cannon had dropped from its battered carriage and was lying in the meadow, rusting

away to ruin. A lamb was feeding at its very mouth, and round it on every side the flowers were growing. But really that is not a picture of the Golden Age. The cannon is not to rust; it is to be converted, its strength is to be transfigured. After the Franco-German War many of the cannon balls were remade into church bells. One of our manufacturers in Birmingham told me only a week or two ago, that he was busy turning the empty cases of the shells used in the recent war into dinner gongs.''

THE COMING KING

Isa. 11 : 1, 2

When we come to the second section of the lesson, Isaiah the prophet sets forth the character of the coming King. The King who was to establish peace and good will among men was of course Jesus, and yet the prophet, speaking centuries before his birth, outlined his character. (1) He would be of royal birth, a descendant of David. Judah was the true kingdom of David, and the new ruler would belong to his line. Assyria, the great enemy of God's people, like a mighty cedar, would fall and have no successor. When the cedar is felled it dies. Judah, however, even though apparently destroyed, would, like an oak, send forth a shoot that would grow into a mighty tree. Jesus in the days of his flesh was called the ''Son of David.'' (2) He would possess ''the spirit of wisdom and understanding.'' He would be a wise leader and teacher. Intelligence was his portion. (3) He would have ''the spirit of counsel and might.'' Strength would belong to him. All power was given unto him in heaven and on earth. (4) He would possess ''the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of Jehovah.'' He would be the messenger of God and his life would reveal God to men. All these prophecies were fulfilled in Jesus who is the express Image of God.

THE KING OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

Isa. 11 : 3-5

The outstanding quality of the reign of the coming King would be righteousness. He was to be a just ruler. He would fear Jehovah and would not ''judge after the sight of his eyes, neither decide after the hearing of his ears,'' but would decide with equity and with righteousness. He would not be partial to the rich, but would look with favor upon the poor, and in all things would be faithful. It is a beautiful picture of a righteous king, and Jesus alone satisfies its demands. No earthly king, no prince, no governor, ever met the perfect condition of this portrait. Only when Christ is crowned King over our lives, and over our nation, will we have true righteousness among men. Dr. John Kelman in his book on ''War and Preaching'' tells this story.

''Late at night, when the decks were silent on a great Atlantic liner, long before the war, I found myself alone with a man famous in the public life of the United States. We fell into serious conversation about the social conditions of our great cities. I asked him what remedy he proposed, and he replied, 'An Emperor.' I expressed my astonishment that any citizen of your great Republic should have cherished such a hope. 'Yes,' he replied, 'An Emperor—and his name is Jesus Christ.' The Emperor has come, and this is the day of his Empire. Long ago he founded it in sacrifice, bringing peace by the blood of his cross. That peace has been long in coming, and many brave men's lives have been made conformable unto his death that it might come.''

THE PRINCE OF PEACE

Isa. 11 : 6-9

These beautiful verses should be learned by heart. There is nothing in any literature more beautiful. It is a picture of peace and happiness. Even the wild beasts are harmless and in the midst of the world is a little child. We can almost hear Jesus saying ''Suffer the little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for to such belongeth the kingdom of heaven.''

Try to fix these majestic words in your memory. ''And the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of Jehovah, as the waters cover the sea.'' Darwin tells us that man has made the beasts of the forest and the jungle wild and fierce, that fear of man has made them dangerous. A little child's spirit would tame even the wild beasts. ''Baby lies on the rug with the dog and the cat. He is not so strong or lithe or quick as they are, or even as you are. Yet he takes liberties with them which you cannot take—and remember, the cat is of one blood with the leopard, and the dog with the wolf. He lies upon them, rolls over them, treads on their sensitive feet, pulls them about by fur or hair; and yet by some wonderful instinct they recognize his innocence of ill intention and respect it. Were you to inflict half the pain on them which he inflicts, they would soon let you know that they had teeth and claws; but they hardly ever turn on him. The little child leads them where he will, and pretty much as he will.''

In the center of this world of peace is a little child. ''A little child shall lead them.'' The prophet, of course, means that in the new world the spirit that rules will be the spirit of childlikeness. A little child is trustful, not fearful. He is good and kind, not evil and cruel. He is religious and reverent, not worldly and careless, and this spirit of a little child which is the spirit of Jesus is the

only power that can bring peace. When Jesus came the angels sang,

"Glory to God in the highest,
And on earth peace among men in whom he is well pleased."

FOR INTERMEDIATE PUPILS

1. What is meant by the house of the Lord's being on the top of the mountain?
2. How can we do away with war?
3. How can all nations be brought to live together in peace?
4. Who is meant by the "shoot out of the stock of Jesse"?
5. What qualities will the coming King possess?
6. What is meant by the words, "A little child shall lead them"?

The Intermediate Catechism

Q. 26. What is the great work of the Church on earth?

A. The great work of the Church on earth is to bear witness to Jesus Christ and so to advance the Kingdom of God.

FOR SENIOR STUDENTS

1. Why should we strive to end all war?
2. How can war be abolished?
3. Why has the prophecy of Isaiah not been fulfilled?
4. How does Isaiah describe the coming Messiah?
5. What is our duty in making Jesus known to the world?
6. Why is the gospel of Jesus the only cure for war?

The Shorter Catechism

Q. 75. What is forbidden in the eighth command ment?

A. The eighth commandment forbiddeth whatsoever doth, or may, unjustly hinder our own, or our neighbor's, wealth or outward estate.

Lesson VII—HEZEKIAH LEADS HIS PEOPLE BACK TO GOD

THE GOLDEN TEXT—"God is gracious and merciful, and will not turn away his face from you, if ye return unto him."—II Chron. 30: 9.

TEXT OF LESSON, II Chron. 30: 1-9, 13

For entire lesson, see II Chron., ch. 30

COMMON VERSION

1 And Hez-e-ki'ah sent to all Is'ra-el and Ju'dah, and wrote letters also to E'phra-im and Ma-nas'-seh, that they should come to the house of the LORD at Je-ru'sa-lem, to keep the passover unto the LORD God of Is'ra-el.

2 For the king had taken counsel, and his princes, and all the congregation in Je-ru'sa-lem, to keep the passover in the second month.

3 For they could not keep it at that time, because the priests had not sanctified themselves sufficiently, neither had the people gathered themselves together to Je-ru'sa-lem.

4 And the thing pleased the king and all the congregation.

5 So they established a decree to make proclamation throughout all Is'ra-el, from Be'er-she'ba even to Dan, that they should come to keep the passover unto the LORD God of Is'ra-el at Je-ru'sa-lem: for they had not done *it* of a long *time in such sort* as it was written.

6 So the posts went with the letters from the king and his princes throughout all Is'ra-el and Ju'dah, and according to the commandment of the king, saying, Ye children of Is'ra-el, turn again unto the LORD God of A'bra-ham, I'saac, and Is'-ra-el, and he will return to the remnant of you, that are escaped out of the hand of the kings of As-syr'i-a.

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1 And Hezekiah sent to all Israel and Judah, and wrote letters also to Ephraim and Manasseh, that they should come to the house of Jehovah at Jerusalem, to keep the passover unto Jehovah, the God of Israel. 2 For the king had taken counsel, and his princes, and all the assembly in Jerusalem, to keep the passover in the second month. 3 For they could not keep it at that time, because the priests had not sanctified themselves in sufficient number, neither had the people gathered themselves together to Jerusalem. 4 And the thing was right in the eyes of the king and of all the assembly. 5 So they established a decree to make proclamation throughout all Israel, from Beer-sheba even to Dan, that they should come to keep the passover unto Jehovah, the God of Israel, at Jerusalem: for they had not kept it in great numbers in such sort as it is written. 6 So the posts went with the letters from the king and his princes throughout all Israel and Judah, and according to the commandment of the king, saying, Ye children of Israel, turn again unto Jehovah, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, that he may return to the remnant that are escaped of you out of the hand of the

7 And be not ye like your fathers, and like your brethren, which trespassed against the LORD God of their fathers, *who* therefore gave them up to desolation, as ye see.

8 Now be ye not stiffnecked, as your fathers *were, but* yield yourselves unto the LORD, and enter into his sanctuary, which he hath sanctified for ever: and serve the LORD your God, that the fierceness of his wrath may turn away from you.

9 For if ye turn again unto the LORD, your brethren and your children *shall find* compassion before them that lead them captive, so that they shall come again into this land: for the LORD your God *is* gracious and merciful, and will not turn away *his* face from you, if ye return unto him.

* * * * *

13 ¶ And there assembled at Je-ru'sa-lem much people to keep the feast of unleavened bread in the second month, a very great congregation.

kings of Assyria. 7 And be not ye like your fathers, and like your brethren, who trespassed against Jehovah, the God of their fathers, so that he gave them up to desolation, as ye see. 8 Now be ye not stiffnecked, as your fathers were; but yield yourselves unto Jehovah, and enter into his sanctuary, which he hath sanctified for ever, and serve Jehovah your God, that his fierce anger may turn away from you. 9 For if ye turn again unto Jehovah, your brethren and your children shall find compassion before them that led them captive, and shall come again into this land: for Jehovah your God is gracious and merciful, and will not turn away his face from you, if ye return unto him.

* * * * *

13 And there assembled at Jerusalem much people to keep the feast of unleavened bread in the second month, a very great assembly.

The Time—727 B.C. **The Place**—Jerusalem.

DAILY HOME READINGS

DATE	TITLE	REFERENCE
Monday, May 8	A Godly King's Edict	II Chron. 29 : 1-11.
Tuesday, May 9	The Temple Cleansed	II Chron. 29 : 12-19.
Wednesday, May 10	Sacrifices Presented	II Chron. 29 : 20-30.
Thursday, May 11	Sacrifices Offered	II Chron. 29 : 31-36.
Friday, May 12	Call to Worship	II Chron. 30 : 1-12.
Saturday, May 13	The Solemn Assembly	II Chron. 30 : 13-27.
Sunday, May 14	Joyous Worship	Ps. 96 : 1-10.

DIFFICULT WORDS AND PHRASES

1. Hezekiah. The twelfth king of Judah. He began to reign 727 B.C. **Israel and Judah.** Samaria, the capital of Israel, fell 722 B.C., five years after Hezekiah was made king.

2. In the second month. See Num. 9 : 10, 11. If hindered individuals might hold the passover the second instead of the first month, and Hezekiah thought this permission might be extended to the whole community.

3. At that time. That is the fourteenth day of the first month. The Temple had not been cleansed till the sixteenth day. II Chron. 29 : 17.

5. Beer-sheba even to Dan. Beer-sheba was at the extreme south and Dan at the extreme north.

6. The kings of Assyria. See II Kings 15 : 29, and I Chron. 5 : 26. The reference is to Tiglath-pileser.

HEZEKIAH, THE KING AND THE REFORMER

Uzziah was succeeded by his son Jotham. It is probable that Jotham acted as king during the years that Uzziah was a leper. Jotham was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned for sixteen years. The record of his reign is very suggestive. "And he did that which was right in the eyes of Jehovah, according to all that his father Uzziah had done: howbeit he entered not into the temple of Jehovah. And the people did yet corruptly." He carried on the reforms of Uzziah and "became mighty, because he ordered his ways before Jehovah his God." He was followed by his son Ahaz, who was crowned king when he was twenty years old, and he, too, reigned sixteen years. Of him it is written, "he did not that which was right in the eyes of Jehovah, like David his father; but he walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, and made also molten images for the Baalim. Moreover he burnt incense in the valley of the son of Hinnom, and burnt his children in the fire, according to the abominations of the nations whom Jehovah cast out before the children of Israel. And he sacrificed and burnt incense in the high places, and on the hills, and under every green tree." It is a very bad record and shows that Judah had followed Israel in idolatry and foreign and heathen customs. The story of his disastrous reign is told in II Chron., ch. 28 and it should be read. He was smitten on every hand by his enemies. He robbed the Temple to pay tribute to Assyria and closed its doors and was so hated when he died that the people "brought him not into the sepulchres of the kings." He was succeeded by Hezekiah, his son. He began to reign when he was twenty-five and ruled over Judah for twenty-nine years.

The story of Hezekiah's reign begins in ch. 29. It is said of him that "he did that which was right in the eyes of Jehovah, according to all that David

his father had done.'' The very first thing he did was to open the Temple which had been robbed and closed by his father Ahaz. Then he gathered together the priests and the Levites and gave them a solemn charge. Read II Chron. 29 : 5-11. He ordered them to sanctify themselves, cleanse the Temple, relight the lamps, and rededicate themselves and the Temple to Jehovah their God. They began on the first day of the month and finished the task in sixteen days. When the Temple was cleansed and the priests sanctified, Hezekiah ordered the priests and the Levites to offer burnt offerings and sin offerings and peace offerings upon the altar, and all the people sang praises unto God, and the trumpets sounded. It was a time of great penitence, prayer, and praise. So many were the oxen and sheep brought that there were not enough priests to prepare them for sacrifice and ''their brethren the Levites'' assisted them. ''So the service of the house of Jehovah was set in order. And Hezekiah rejoiced, and all the people, because of that which God had prepared for the people: for the thing was done suddenly.''

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THE PASSOVER AS NOW CELEBRATED IN SAMARIA

Hezekiah, however, was not satisfied with having consecrated the Temple and restored its services. He sought to unite the nation, and prepared for the keeping of the great festival of the passover, and at this point in the history our lesson text begins.

THE PASSOVER FEAST

II Chron. 30 : 1-4

The date of the passover was the fourteenth day of the first month, but it was already the sixteenth day before the priests had sanctified themselves, and cleansed and consecrated the house of God. It was permitted in the law, Num. 9 : 10, 11, for persons who had been hindered from keeping the passover the first month, to do so the second month on the fourteenth day, and Hezekiah thought the same permission might be granted to the nation.

The passover was the great national festival of the Jews. It celebrated their deliverance from Egypt, and was observed as the anniversary of their birth as a nation. It was their national birthday, their Independence Day. As such it belonged to the whole people, and everyone who was a Jew was interested in it.

Hezekiah thought the time had come to reunite the people of Israel and Judah, to heal the divisions of the past, and to unite all the people in a common act of consecration and so bring about a return to Jehovah and a return of national unity. The people of Judah were in hearty accord with the king's purpose and all preparations were made for a wonderful celebration of the passover in Jerusalem.

Hezekiah, in his desire to bring the people back to God, pointed the way to true national prosperity. His political policy was to trust God, to acknowledge him, and to follow his laws.

PREPARING THE PASSOVER

II Chron. 30 : 5

When our nation observes Thanksgiving Day to-day, the President issues a proclamation calling upon the people to observe properly the day so appointed. When the Hebrew nation was true to God, and the Temple services were held regularly, there was no need to issue special proclamation. But for years the Temple had been closed. Things had gone from bad to worse. ''The reign of Hezekiah marked an important era in the history of the Jews. That people had fallen into the very depths of idolatry and impurity of worship and life. They lay at the mercy of their foes, the Assyrians. The law of their God had been forgotten; the doors

of his house had been closed. Altars to strange gods had been built in every corner of Jerusalem, and high places and Asherim in every city of Judah. The spirit of iniquity was rampant in the land; the voice of religion was all but silent; and death and destruction seemed to be closing in on every side upon the ill-starred city of Jerusalem. But now Ahaz, the evil, is dead, and Hezekiah, his son, reigns in his stead. And of Hezekiah it is written that 'after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor among them that were before him.' '' Hezekiah directed his proclamation to everyone. He issued it in the name of the king and of the priests of the Temple and of the princes of the people of Jerusalem to everyone in Judah and in Israel. It was sent from Beer-sheba in the far south to Dan in the far north, for the passover had not been so kept for years. It stirred the whole nation, and awakened hope in many hearts. A nation is never at its best until it acknowledges God.

THE PROCLAMATION

II Chron. 30 : 6-9

The words of the proclamation of Hezekiah should be read. It reads like a prophetic message and shows how sincere the king was, how true at heart, how faithful to God.

Letters took longer to deliver in those days than they do now, but couriers carried the king's proclamation to all parts of the land, especially to Israel. It was specially addressed to the people who were still left in the Northern Kingdom, and Hezekiah called upon them to return to God whom they had neglected and forsaken. He pointed out that the cause of their ruin was their rebellion against God, and promised them peace and prosperity if they would renew their loyalty to Jehovah. ''For if ye turn again unto Jehovah, your brethren and your children shall find compassion before them that led them captive, and shall come again into this land: for Jehovah your God is gracious and merciful, and will not turn away his face from you, if ye return unto him.''

Hezekiah's words to the idolatrous people of Israel are very wonderful. He pictured God as kind and merciful, willing to forgive and ready to help. How often we misunderstand God! When we do wrong we think he is angry at us, whereas his love never fails. He loves us in spite of our sin, and it is his love and pity which redeem us. The favorite word of the Old Testament prophet was, ''Fear not,'' and the favorite word of Jesus was ''Be of good cheer.'' The last words of John Wesley were ''The best of all is God with us.''

THE RESPONSE OF THE PEOPLE

II Chron. 30 : 10-12

(These verses are not printed, but they show what occurred between the sending out of the posts and the gathering for the passover.)

The proclamation of the king received a mixed welcome. In Israel some welcomed it, and some ridiculed it. The people of Ephraim and Manasseh laughed at the messengers and mocked and scorned them. They were like the wicked husbandmen of whom Jesus spoke. The people of Asher and Manasseh and of Zebulun on the other hand humbled themselves and came to Jerusalem. This double reception is still given to the gospel. There are still those who laugh at it and scorn it, while others receive it and rejoice in it. The fault is not in the gospel. Sometimes we speak as if all that people need is to have some new preacher, or some new method, or some new church organization. That is not the fault. People willingly and purposely reject the gospel. They turn away. They close the door. They say, ''When we have a more convenient season.'' There are others who gladly respond. Like the people of Manasseh, Asher, Zebulun, and all the people of Judah, they rise up to obey and worship. Jesus understood the effect of the gospel invitation. He told the parable of the Sower. Some seed brought forth fruit and some was lost. The fault is not in the sower, nor in the seed, but in the soil. The same sun that hardens the clay softens the wax. The same wind that drives the ship forward on its course drives another vessel on the rocks. The same gospel that brings joy to one heart is rejected by another. Jesus does not force himself on anyone. His gospel is an invitation. He says, ''Come unto me.'' We can accept or refuse.

''O Jesus, thou art standing
Outside the fast-closed door,
In lowly patience waiting
To pass the threshold o'er:
Shame on us, Christian brothers,
His name and sign who bear,
O shame, thrice shame upon us,
To keep him standing there!''

THE GREAT ASSEMBLY

II Chron. 30 : 13

The people of Judah flocked to Jerusalem to the feast and many people from the Northern Kingdom assembled with them. It was a great and solemn, and at the same time joyous, occasion. It was the return of a whole nation to God. ''So there was great joy in Jerusalem; for since the time of Solomon the son of David king of Israel there was not the like in Jerusalem. Then the priests the Levites arose and blessed the people: and their voice was heard, and their prayer came up to his holy habitation, even unto heaven.''

The result of their consecration was that they rose up with one heart and destroyed all the idols and all the images in the land and dedicated themselves and their nation to the worship of the one true God.

It is wonderful what one good true man may do when he is loyal to God. Mr. Moody once said,

"God is waiting to show the world what he can do through one man who is wholly dedicated to him." Such a man was Luther, and such a man was Hezekiah. The nation needs men who will be true first of all to God, and who will lead the people in paths of righteousness. Of Hezekiah it is said: "His policy was not to have any policy, but to trust in the living God, to obey his Word, and to follow his guidance. His policy was his religion, and his religion was true policy. The only occasion on which he was tempted to deviate from it was at a later time, and it well-nigh proved fatal to him, as in the sequel it certainly did to his successors. Not that Hezekiah neglected to avail himself of political combinations as they arose. Indeed, this became the source of his danger. He may have argued that not to make use of the means placed within his reach was fatalism, not faith. In this he erred. Yet he did not put his trust in such alliances. He treated them rather as means for defensive than as instruments sought for offensive purposes. The only real help which he sought was that of the living God. Thus religion was the central principle of his reign and the secret of his success."

FOR INTERMEDIATE PUPILS

1. Who succeeded Uzziah?
2. Describe the reign of Ahaz.
3. Why was Hezekiah a good king?
4. Why do we call Hezekiah a reformer?
5. What proclamation did he issue?
6. How was his proclamation received?

The Intermediate Catechism

Q. 27. What is meant by the Kingdom of God?

A. By the Kingdom of God is meant the rule of God in the hearts of men, so that in love to him and to their fellow men, they live in righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

FOR SENIOR STUDENTS

1. Name the kings of Judah between Uzziah and Hezekiah.
2. What was the condition of Judah when Hezekiah became king?
3. What had happened to Israel?
4. What was Hezekiah's first act as king?
5. What is the significance of the passover in Jewish history?
6. How was the passover kept and who observed it?

The Shorter Catechism

Q. 76. Which is the ninth commandment?

A. The ninth commandment is, Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

Q. 77. What is required in the ninth commandment?

A. The ninth commandment requireth the maintaining and promoting of truth between man and man, and of our own and our neighbor's good name, especially in witness-bearing.

Lesson VIII—HILKIAH'S GREAT DISCOVERY

THE GOLDEN TEXT—"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, And light unto my path."—Ps. 119: 105.

TEXT OF LESSON, II Chron. 34: 14-16, 29-32

For entire lesson, see II Chron. 34: 14-33

COMMON VERSION

14 ¶ And when they brought out the money that was brought into the house of the LORD, Hil-ki'ah the priest found a book of the law of the LORD *given* by Mo'ses.

15 And Hil-ki'ah answered and said to Sha'phan the scribe, I have found the book of the law in the house of the LORD. And Hil-ki'ah delivered the book to Sha'phan.

16 And Sha'phan carried the book to the king, and brought the king word back again, saying, All that was committed to thy servants, they do *it*.

* * * * *

29 ¶ Then the king sent and gathered together all the elders of Ju'dah and Je-ru'sa-lem.

30 And the king went up into the house of the LORD, and all the men of Ju'dah, and the inhabitants of Je-ru'sa-lem, and the priests, and the Le'-

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14 And when they brought out the money that was brought into the house of Jehovah, Hilkiah the priest found the book of the law of Jehovah *given* by Moses. 15 And Hilkiah answered and said to Shaphan the scribe, I have found the book of the law in the house of Jehovah. And Hilkiah delivered the book to Shaphan. 16 And Shaphan carried the book to the king, and moreover brought back word to the king, saying, All that was committed to thy servants, they are doing.

* * * * *

29 Then the king sent and gathered together all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem. 30 And the king went up to the house of Jehovah, and all the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the priests, and the Levites, and all the people, both great and small: and he read in their ears

vites, and all the people, great and small: and he read in their ears all the words of the book of the covenant that was found in the house of the LORD.

31 And the king stood in his place, and made a covenant before the LORD, to walk after the LORD, and to keep his commandments, and his testimonies, and his statutes, with all his heart, and with all his soul, to perform the words of the covenant which are written in this book.

32 And he caused all that were present in Je-ru'-sa-lem and Ben'ja-min to stand *to it*. And the inhabitants of Je-ru'sa-lem did according to the covenant of God, the God of their fathers.

all the words of the book of the covenant that was found in the house of Jehovah. 31 And the king stood in his place, and made a covenant before Jehovah, to walk after Jehovah, and to keep his commandments, and his testimonies, and his statutes, with all his heart, and with all his soul, to perform the words of the covenant that were written in this book. 32 And he caused all that were found in Jerusalem and Benjamin to stand *to it*. And the inhabitants of Jerusalem did according to the covenant of God, the God of their fathers.

The Time—About 622 B.C. **The Place**—Jerusalem.

DAILY HOME READINGS

DATE	TITLE	REFERENCE
Monday, May 15	Cleansing the Land	II Chron. 34 : 1-7.
Tuesday, May 16	Repairing the Temple	II Chron. 34 : 8-13.
Wednesday, May 17	Hilkiah's Great Discovery	II Chron. 34 : 14-21.
Thursday, May 18	The Message of the Word	II Chron. 34 : 22-28.
Friday, May 19	The Word Obeyed	II Chron. 34 : 29-33.
Saturday, May 20	Teaching the Word	II Tim. 2 : 1-15.
Sunday, May 21	The Priceless Word of God	Ps. 19 : 7-14.

DIFFICULT WORDS AND PHRASES

14. Hilkiah the priest. In v. 9 he is called "the high priest." The money collected for the restoration of the Temple was intrusted to him. **The book of the law.** "The roll of the law." Probably our Book of Deuteronomy, or a part of it. It had been lost and forgotten.

15. Shaphan the scribe. The repairs of the Temple had been in charge of Shaphan the scribe or secretary, Maaseiah the city governor, and Joah the son of the recorder.

32. To stand to it. They pledged their word that they would keep the covenant and perform the vows.

BETWEEN THE LESSONS

II Chron., ch. 33

It is not possible to understand the lesson unless the entire chapter and the preceding chapters are read. After the death of Hezekiah the king about whom we studied in our last lesson, his son Manasseh was made king. Hezekiah had repaired the Temple, and destroyed the idols and restored the worship of Jehovah. The nation had almost regained its power and independence. The army of Assyria had been overthrown and Jerusalem saved. We would naturally think that after all this the nation would be loyal. But such was not the case. Perhaps of all the kings of Judah, Manasseh, the son of Hezekiah, was the worst. His was a long reign of fifty-five years, and he undid all the good accomplished by his father Hezekiah. So great was the idolatry that it is said that "Manasseh seduced Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that they did evil more than did the nations whom Jehovah destroyed before the children of Israel." The result was that Assyria invaded Judah and took Manasseh away as a prisoner in chains. In his exile he turned to God, and on his return to Judah served Jehovah with humble devotion. He was followed by Amon, his son, who followed in the evil steps of his father until his servants killed him. As we read this record it becomes plain that idolatry was fast taking hold upon the life of Judah, and whenever a king friendly to idolatry sat on the throne, the nation soon forgot God.

GOOD KING JOSIAH

II Chron. 34 : 1-13

Sometimes a good king has a bad son. Manasseh was the son of the good king Hezekiah. Sometimes a bad king has a good son. Josiah the good king was the son of the wicked and idolatrous Amon. There seems to be no rule to guide us. It does not follow that children will be like their fathers. Perhaps if we knew more of their mothers we might understand the secret of their success or failure.

Josiah was just a lad when he became king, but he was one of the best kings of Judah. The writer of the Books of The Chronicles cannot praise him too highly. It is said of him that "he did that which was right in the eyes of Jehovah, and walked in the ways of David his father, and turned not aside to the right hand or to the left. For in the eighth year of his reign, while he was yet young, he began to seek after the God of David his father; and in the twelfth year he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem from the high places, and the Asherim, and the graven images, and the molten images." He began by destroying the idols and images and the places of heathen worship. There was no doubt about the sincerity of his purpose. The images and idols were hewn down and destroyed, and even the bones of dead heathen priests

were burned in the fire. He seems to have gone through the land cleansing the country and clearing it of all heathen customs. All this took time, but having accomplished this, Josiah turned his attention in the eighteenth year of his reign to the restoration of the Temple which had been neglected during the reigns of Manasseh and Amon. Money was collected throughout the land and workmen engaged to repair the house of the Lord. "The men did the work faithfully."

THE BOOK OF THE LAW

II Chron. 34 : 14-16

The work was well on its way under the direction of Hilkiah the high priest when an unusual and important thing happened. Hilkiah discovered the "book of the law." This was probably the roll of the book known as Deuteronomy, containing the law and the covenant. It was at least a portion of Deuteronomy, if it was not the entire book. It was an important discovery. It had been lost in the rubbish of the Temple, or had been hidden away in some cupboard or closet. Books were scarce and costly, and when Hilkiah found it he called Shaphan, the scribe, whose business it was to read and to guard carefully the books of the Temple. It was a moment of great joy for them, for they had now in their hands the law of God for the nation. Did you ever think what would happen if we were to lose the Bible for fifty or more years, and then suddenly find it? The high priest must have known something of its contents, but now he could have the very words read to the king and to the people. "At the coronation of young King Edward VI, three swords were brought to be carried before him, as a symbol of his being head of three kingdoms. 'There is one sword yet lacking,' said the king—'the Bible. That Book is the sword of the Spirit, and to be preferred before any other. Without that sword we can do nothing, we have no power.' The Bible was then brought, at his command, and carried before him in the procession."

THE KING AND THE BOOK

II Chron. 34 : 17-28

Take your Bible and read the story of what happened when Shaphan, the scribe, took the Book that had been found to the king. Shaphan reported about the work done in the Temple, and after telling about the discovery of the Book, read it to the king. It must have been an impressive scene. The listening king was willing to hear from the lips of a humble scribe the Word of God. Dr. Maclaren says: "If a man will give God's Word a fair hearing, and be honest with himself, it will bring him to his knees. No man rightly uses God's law who is not convinced by it of his sin, and impelled to that self-abased sorrow of which the rent royal robes were the passionate expression. Josiah was wise when he did not turn his thoughts to other people's sins, but began with his own, even whilst he included others." Lord Cecil in speaking about the Bible and its abiding value said: "Whatever use man makes of this Standard of truth, the Standard itself remains fixed, tried, and unimpaired. When I take down a great author, such as Lord Bacon, I find that time has discovered many errors, and rendered obsolete many positions, to be found in that most comprehensive of human minds. But I see that time can take nothing from the Bible. I find it a living monitor. Like the sun, it is the same in its light and influence to man this day as it was ages ago. It can meet every present inquiry; it can console under every present loss; and it can become, in God's hand, a daily exciting cause of growth and comfort." The king was stirred but was not satisfied with the mere reading of the law. So he sent a message to the leaders in the Temple asking them to inquire of the priests regarding the will of God for the nation in its present distress. The king was deeply in earnest. So the priests inquired of Huldah a prophetess, an obscure woman, and she sent this message back to the king. "Because thy heart was tender, and thou didst humble thyself before God, when thou heardest his words against this place, and against the inhabitants thereof, and hast humbled thyself before me, and hast rent thy clothes, and wept before me; I also have heard thee, saith Jehovah. Behold, I will gather thee to thy fathers, and thou shalt be gathered to thy grave in peace, neither shall thine eyes see all the evil that I will bring upon this place, and upon the inhabitants thereof. And they brought back word to the king."

The word of the Lord was just but it was also merciful. Even though later Josiah died in battle, God kept his promise to him and his heart was at peace.

THE BOOK AND THE PEOPLE

II Chron. 34 : 29, 30

What a wonderful king Josiah was! Having heard the message and answered it for himself, he gathered the people together and had the Book read to them. What a sight! The great crowd of people listened to the reading of the Word of God. Its words were new and strange to them, but they heard the reading of the Book through to the end. Have you ever read a single Book of the Bible through at one reading? Do it and see how interesting it is. Henry Ward Beecher, the great American preacher, in one of his sermons says: "Do you ever think as you pass along the chapters of the Bible, that they are now like the king's highways; that more saints than tongue could count have walked along these pages toward heaven; that each verse has been a bosom like a mother's to some child in Christ; that each verse has had in it blessings for a multitude of souls; that these passages of hope and joy have made melody for thrice ten million struggling souls; that these Scriptures are a sublime renewal of the miracle of the loaf which

increases by using, and which feeds without diminution? These unwasting chapters have supplied armies, and multitudes of faint and hungry saints, but there is not a particle gone. There is as much yet for the famishing soul as when first they were set forth. To the end the loaf shall be broken, and shall yield a liberal abundance for every human want; and to the end the undiminished whole shall remain a witness and a miracle of the divine spiritual bounty."

A COVENANT WITH GOD

II Chron. 34 : 31, 32

When the Book had been read through, the king took his stand probably near the desk from which the scribe had read the roll, and pledged himself to a covenant pledge before Jehovah. He took a vow "to walk after Jehovah, and to keep his commandments, and his testimonies, and his statutes, with all his heart, and with all his soul, to perform the words of the covenant that were written in this book."

It was a brave and splendid thing to do. The king was not ashamed to pledge himself before the people to be true to God and his Word. Many great leaders, statesmen, and kings have done the same. Daniel Webster who read the Bible through once every year said, "If we abide by the principles taught in the Bible, our country will go on prospering and to prosper; but if we and our posterity neglect its instruction and authority, no man can tell how sudden a catastrophe may overwhelm us, and bury all our glory in profound obscurity." Woodrow Wilson said: "I am sorry for the men who do not read the Bible every day. I wonder why they deprive themselves of the strength and of the pleasure." Abraham Lincoln said: "All the good from the Saviour of the world is communicated through this Book; but for this Book we could not know right from wrong. All the things desirable to man are contained in it." General Grant said: "Hold fast to the Bible as the sheet anchor to your liberties. Write its precepts in your heart and practice them in your lives. To the influence of this Book we are indebted for all the progress made in true civilization, and to this we must look as our guide in the future."

The king not only pledged himself to be true to the Word and law of God, but he pledged all the people in a covenant promise. He caused them to "stand to it." That is a fine thing to do. We pledge ourselves to many things; let us pledge ourselves to be true to God, to his Word, to his law, and to the covenant which we have made with him and he with us. When his son left home, Charles Dickens wrote him this letter: "It is my comfort and my sincere conviction that you are going to try the life for which you are best fitted. I think its freedom and wildness more suited to you than any experiment in a study or office would have been. Try to do to others as you would have them do to you, and do not be discouraged if they fail sometimes. It is much better for you that they should fail in obeying the greatest rule laid down by the Saviour, than that you should. I put the New Testament among your books for the very same reason and with the very same hopes that made me write an easy account of it for you when you were a little child—because it is the best Book that ever was or ever will be known in the world, and because it teaches you the best lessons by which any human creature who tries to be truthful and faithful to duty can possibly be guided." Let us like Josiah renew our covenant to God and to his Word.

FOR INTERMEDIATE PUPILS

1. What relation was Josiah to the kings preceding him?
2. What reform did Josiah introduce?
3. What is meant by the "book of the law"?
4. How did the king and the people receive the reading of the law?
5. Why did the king pledge himself and the people in a solemn covenant?
6. How does the Bible influence national affairs to-day?

The Intermediate Catechism

Q. 28. What is our sure hope concerning the Kingdom of God?

A. Our sure hope concerning the Kingdom of God is that it will increase until it is fully come in all the earth.

Q. 29. What is our Lord's last command concerning the Kingdom of God?

A. Our Lord's last command concerning the Kingdom of God is: "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."—Matt. 28 : 19, 20.

FOR SENIOR STUDENTS

1. Name the kings of Judah from Rehoboam to Josiah.
2. Why do we call Josiah a religious reformer?
3. Why was Josiah disturbed when the book of the law was read?
4. How did it come that the book of the law was lost?
5. Into what covenant with God did the king and the people enter?
6. Why is the Bible the textbook of both men and nations?

The Shorter Catechism

Q. 78. What is forbidden in the ninth commandment?

A. The ninth commandment forbiddeth whatsoever is prejudicial to truth, or injurious to our own or our neighbor's good name.

JEREMIAH SPEAKS BOLDLY FOR GOD

THE GOLDEN TEXT—"Amend your ways and your doings, and obey the voice of Jehovah." —Jer. 26: 13.

TEXT OF LESSON, Jer. 26: 8-16

For entire lesson, see Jer., ch. 26

COMMON VERSION

8 ¶ Now it came to pass, when Jer-e-mi'ah had made an end of speaking all that the LORD had commanded *him* to speak unto all the people, that the priests and the prophets and all the people took him, saying, Thou shalt surely die.

9 Why hast thou prophesied in the name of the LORD, saying, This house shall be like Shi'loh, and this city shall be desolate without an inhabitant? And all the people were gathered against Jer-e-mi'ah in the house of the LORD.

10 ¶ When the princes of Ju'dah heard these things, then they came up from the king's house unto the house of the LORD, and sat down in the entry of the new gate of the LORD'S *house*.

11 Then spake the priests and the prophets unto the princes and to all the people, saying, This man *is* worthy to die; for he hath prophesied against this city, as ye have heard with your ears.

12 ¶ Then spake Jer-e-mi'ah unto all the princes and to all the people, saying, The LORD sent me to prophesy against this house and against this city all the words that ye have heard.

13 Therefore now amend your ways and your doings, and obey the voice of the LORD your God; and the LORD will repent him of the evil that he hath pronounced against you.

14 As for me, behold, I *am* in your hand: do with me as seemeth good and meet unto you.

15 But know ye for certain, that if ye put me to death, ye shall surely bring innocent blood upon yourselves, and upon this city, and upon the inhabitants thereof: for of a truth the LORD hath sent me unto you to speak all these words in your ears.

16 ¶ Then said the princes and all the people unto the priests and to the prophets; This man *is* not worthy to die: for he hath spoken to us in the name of the LORD our God.

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8 And it came to pass, when Jeremiah had made an end of speaking all that Jehovah had commanded him to speak unto all the people, that the priests and the prophets and all the people laid hold on him, saying, Thou shalt surely die. 9 Why hast thou prophesied in the name of Jehovah, saying, This house shall be like Shiloh, and this city shall be desolate, without inhabitant? And all the people were gathered unto Jeremiah in the house of Jehovah.

10 And when the princes of Judah heard these things, they came up from the king's house unto the house of Jehovah; and they sat in the entry of the new gate of Jehovah's *house*. 11 Then spake the priests and the prophets unto the princes and to all the people, saying, This man is worthy of death; for he hath prophesied against this city, as ye have heard with your ears. 12 Then spake Jeremiah unto all the princes and to all the people, saying, Jehovah sent me to prophesy against this house and against this city all the words that ye have heard. 13 Now therefore amend your ways and your doings, and obey the voice of Jehovah your God; and Jehovah will repent him of the evil that he hath pronounced against you. 14 But as for me, behold, I am in your hand: do with me as is good and right in your eyes. 15 Only know ye for certain that, if ye put me to death, ye will bring innocent blood upon yourselves, and upon this city, and upon the inhabitants thereof; for of a truth Jehovah hath sent me unto you to speak all these words in your ears.

16 Then said the princes and all the people unto the priests and to the prophets: This man is not worthy of death; for he hath spoken to us in the name of Jehovah our God.

The Time—About 608 B.C.

The Place—Jerusalem.

DAILY HOME READINGS

Date	Title	Reference
Monday, May 22	Jeremiah Speaks Boldly for God	Jer. 26 : 1-9.
Tuesday, May 23	Jeremiah Threatened with Death	Jer. 26 : 10-19.
Wednesday, May 24	A Brave Prophet's Message	II Sam. 12 : 1-15.
Thursday, May 25	Elijah Reproves Ahab	I Kings 21 : 17-27.
Friday, May 26	Jeremiah Reproves Israel	Jer. 7 : 1-11.
Saturday, May 27	Amos Reproves Sinful Indulgence	Amos 6 : 1-11.
Sunday, May 28	God's Mercy to the Obedient	Ps. 103 : 13-22.

DIFFICULT WORDS AND PHRASES

8. Jeremiah. The great prophet of Judah. His name means "Jehovah doth establish." He was born at Anathoth. **Shalt surely die.** According to the law in Deut. 18 : 20, a prophet speaking without God's command was put to death.

9. Like Shiloh. Destroyed by the Philistines. Ch. 7 : 12, 14; I Sam. 4 : 10-12, 22; Ps. 78 : 60, 61.

10. The princes. The heads of prominent houses who had taken up their residence in Jerusalem. They were not prejudiced as were the priests.

THE PROPHET JEREMIAH

Jeremiah was the prophet of Judah during the days of her downfall. He was born at Anathoth, a little village north of Jerusalem, and his family was well-to-do. He had a personal attendant, a scribe named Baruch. Jeremiah's father was Hilkiah, who is not to be identified with the high priest of the time of Josiah.

Jeremiah was called to be a prophet, and at first refused. See ch. 1: 6. He felt himself to be unfit and called himself "a child." He received his call in the thirteenth year of the reign of Josiah and lived and spoke for God during the reigns of Josiah, Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah. These were the last kings of Judah. The power of Assyria had weakened, and Babylon took its place and had become Judah's foe. The last king of Judah, Zedekiah, was blinded and carried off captive into Babylon together with a large number of the people. Jeremiah refused to speak words of hope, but steadfastly maintained that Jerusalem because of her sins would fall into the power of Babylon. He was called a false prophet, a traitor to his country. He, however, remained loyal to the last, until he was taken into Egypt, ch. 43 : 4-7, where according to tradition he met a martyr's death. He is the sorrowful prophet of the Old Testament.

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JEREMIAH

THE KINGS OF JUDAH

Jeremiah began to prophesy in the reign of Josiah, concerning whom we studied in our last lesson. He was a great reformer and tried to stem the tide of idolatry that was sweeping over the land. The discovery of the book of the law helped Josiah in reëstablishing the worship of Jehovah, and doubtless Jeremiah found strength and hope in the king's courage and righteous policies.

Meanwhile Assyria, the great power which overthrew the Northern Kingdom, had fallen. The attempt of Sennacherib of Assyria to capture Judah in the days of Hezekiah had come to disaster, and now Egypt and Babylon were struggling for world supremacy. Josiah took issue against Egypt, and in the battle of Megiddo, 609 B.C., he was slain.

He was succeeded by Jehoahaz, who after a brief reign of three months, was carried captive to Egypt, and Judah was made a tributary nation to Egypt. Jehoiakim, the elder brother of Jehoahaz, was made king. He was put on the throne by the king of Egypt and during the eleven years of his reign the reforms of Josiah were undone and idolatry and immorality returned to possess the land. He was cruel, selfish, and careless of his nation's honor. Jeremiah protested so strongly and spoke so boldly for God that the priests demanded his death. It is during the reign of Jehoiakim that our lesson occurs. Jeremiah was forced to oppose the policy of the king, and so made himself appear as if he were an enemy of his own country.

JEREMIAH THE PROPHET

Jer. 26 : 1-7

It is necessary to understand clearly Jeremiah's position. Jehoiakim, the king, was the servant and vassal of Egypt. Meanwhile, the power of Babylon was growing stronger and stronger, and it was certain that sooner or later the struggle between Egypt and Babylon would be decided by war. The people of Judah under King Jehoiakim held to Egypt, while Jeremiah, under the guidance of God, knew that at last Egypt would be overthrown and Babylon would be supreme. When that time came, Judah would go down with Egypt. Jeremiah spoke in favor of Babylon. He insisted that sooner or later Babylon would conquer. For this he was hated and ridiculed and imprisoned, and at last exiled. "Jeremiah's ministry was a lifelong mar-

tyrdom. It was in its nature a burden that might well have crushed the strongest spirit. Not only was he compelled to stand almost alone against the whole nation; but he was actually the object of bitter persecution; his very life was constantly in danger. His neighbors at Anathoth sought to murder him. They 'devised devices' against him saying, 'Let us destroy the tree with the fruit thereof, and let us cut him off from the land of the living, that his name may be no more remembered.' His own family raised the hue and cry after him, and could not be trusted. 'Denounce, and we will denounce him, say all my familiar friends, they that watch for my fall; peradventure he will be persuaded, and we shall prevail against him, and we shall take our revenge on him.' The priest who was the chief officer of the Temple thrust him in the stocks for profaning (as he thought) the Temple court with his forebodings of evil. The popular prophets were in constant opposition to him, both in Jerusalem and in Babylon, endeavoring, only too successfully, to neutralize his message with their flattering falsehoods.''

THE PLOT TO KILL JEREMIAH

Jer. 26 : 8, 9

One day Jeremiah was ordered by God to stand in the court of the Temple and call the people to prayer and penitence. God was very patient with his people. It is not his will that any should perish but that all shall turn to him and live. Jeremiah, therefore, stood before the people who mistrusted him and said, ''Thus saith Jehovah: If ye will not hearken to me, to walk in my law, which I have set before you, to hearken to the words of my servants the prophets, whom I send unto you, even rising up early and sending them, but ye have not hearkened; then will I make this house like Shiloh, and will make this city a curse to all the nations of the earth.'' The priests and the prophets were so angry at the words of Jeremiah that they laid hold of him and said: ''Thou shalt surely die. Why hast thou prophesied in the name of Jehovah, saying, This house shall be like Shiloh, and this city shall be desolate, without inhabitant?''

There was a law in Deut. 18 : 20 to the effect that ''the prophet, that shall speak a word presumptuously in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, that same prophet shall die.'' Of course Jeremiah could do nothing against the mob. He did not object to the law, but he knew in his heart that he had spoken not false words but the very word God had given him to speak. Dr. McClure, President of McCormick Theological Seminary says: ''It is a great hour in any man's life when he is obliged to stand up alone and state his case or defend his cause. What an hour that was in Paul's history when before the Roman officials 'no man took his part,' but, dependent as he was on sympathy and fellowship, he stood alone! It is when a man is absolutely left alone, in danger or disgrace, that the deepest test of his character is reached. That is the reason why the nighttime, which seems to say to us 'You are alone with God,' has its impressiveness and why the death hour has a similar impressiveness.''

THE DEFENSE OF JEREMIAH

Jer. 26 : 10-13

It was a critical hour. Jeremiah stood alone before an angry mob. It was like the days that were to come when Jesus would stand alone before Pilate, and Paul alone before Nero, and Luther alone before the Diet of Worms. The princes of Judah had heard of the mob and attempted murder and had hastened to the Temple, and there in the court of the Temple Jeremiah was put on trial. The priests and the false prophets demanded his death because he had spoken words which they said were his own and not God's. The test of whether a man was a true prophet of God, was the fact that what he said came to pass. Of course Jeremiah's words could not be so tested, for only time would tell who was right. So all he could do was to state his own case, which he did. He said, ''Jehovah sent me to prophesy against this house and against this city all the words that ye have heard.'' They were true words spoken by a true man. Notice that he directed his remarks to the people and to the princes. He ignored the priests and the prophets who were his enemies and appealed to the people and the princes who were unprejudiced. Not only did he assert his loyalty and his dependence upon God, but he repeated his invitation and his warning. ''Now therefore amend your ways and your doings, and obey the voice of Jehovah your God; and Jehovah will repent him of the evil that he hath pronounced against you.'' That was the act of a courageous man. When Hugh Latimer preached against the policies of the king of England, he was ordered to preach before the king himself. Before he began he said: ''Hugh Latimer, thou art to preach before the king of England. Take heed what thou sayest for he may take thy life.'' Then he said: ''Hugh Latimer, remember thou art to preach before the King of kings. Remember therefore what thou dost say for thou must stand before him on the Day of Judgment.'' And then the brave preacher proceeded to preach the same sermon and say the same words. So did Jeremiah. He was a hero. He was not afraid. No man who speaks the truth need be afraid.

JEREMIAH'S COURAGE

Jer. 26 : 14, 15

Having spoken his message boldly to the princes and the people, Jeremiah confirmed his words by stating that he was not afraid to die. Whether he lived or died would not decide the question as to whether he spoke words of truth. He was not afraid of anything they could do to him. He de-

fied them. He said, "Only know ye for certain that, if ye put me to death, ye will bring innocent blood upon yourselves, and upon this city, and upon the inhabitants thereof; for of a truth Jehovah hath sent me unto you to speak all these words in your ears." Those were the words of a brave, true, fearless man.

In the Book of Daniel we read that the three friends of Daniel were commanded to worship the image which the king had erected or else be cast into the furnace of fire. They answered: "O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer thee in this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace; and he will deliver us out of thy hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up." When Peter and John were ordered by the Jewish council to be silent about Jesus and the gospel and suffer persecution and perhaps death, they replied: "Whether it is right in the sight of God to hearken unto you rather than unto God, judge ye: for we cannot but speak the things which we saw and heard." When Luther was ordered to deny the faith which he professed he said, "Here I stand, I cannot do otherwise; God help me." The right life is the fearless life.

THE VICTORY OF FAITH

Jer. 26 : 16

The princes and the people were more open-minded than the priests and the false prophets who hated Jeremiah, and they were convinced that Jeremiah spoke the truth. They said, "This man is not worthy of death; for he hath spoken to us in the name of Jehovah our God." For a time Jeremiah was safe. Later on sorrow and persecution came to him and in the end he was imprisoned and exiled for his faith, but for this time at least he conquered, and his enemies were silenced. Jeremiah did not say, "My country right or wrong." "My flag right or wrong." He said, "I'll go with my country when she is right, and I will rebuke her when she is wrong." Religion is higher than a selfish patriotism, and the highest patriotism bows first of all to the way and will of God. Jeremiah believed that only in returning to God could there be safety and security for the nation. He was not a prophet of despair but of hope. He knew a better day would come after the stormy night.

Jeremiah in his sorrows and in his loyalty was like Jesus. He learned obedience through the things that he suffered. His suffering drew him nearer to God, and his life became a symbol of the highest patriotism.

FOR INTERMEDIATE PUPILS

1. What kings ruled Judah in the days of Jeremiah?
2. What nations were great at that time?
3. Why was Jeremiah persecuted?
4. What ground did the priests think they had for putting Jeremiah to death?
5. Who saved Jeremiah from death?
6. Why do we call Jeremiah a hero?

The Intermediate Catechism

Q. 30. What are the special hindrances to our Christian life?

A. The special hindrances to our Christian life are temptations to sin which beset us from within and from without and against which we should always watch and pray.

FOR SENIOR STUDENTS

1. What was the condition of Assyria, Egypt, and Babylon in the time of Jeremiah?
2. What was the political condition of Judah?
3. Who was king of Judah at the time of this lesson, and what was his character?
4. What was the message of Jeremiah to Judah?
5. Why did the priests and the prophets treat Jeremiah so?
6. Why does the life of Jeremiah make you think of Jesus?

The Shorter Catechism

Q. 79. Which is the tenth commandment?

A. The tenth commandment is, Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbor's.

Lesson X—JEHOIAKIM TRIES TO DESTROY GOD'S WORD

THE GOLDEN TEXT—"The word of our God shall stand forever."—Isa. 40: 8.

TEXT OF LESSON, Jer. 36: 4-8, 20-24, 32

For entire lesson, see Jer., ch. 36

COMMON VERSION

4 Then Jer-e-mi'ah called Ba'ruch the son of Ne-ri'ah: and Ba'ruch wrote from the mouth of Jer-e-mi'ah all the words of the LORD, which

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4 Then Jeremiah called Baruch the son of Neriah; and Baruch wrote from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of Jehovah, which he had spoken

he had spoken unto him, upon a roll of a book.

5 And Jer-e-mi'ah commanded Ba'ruch, saying, I *am* shut up; I cannot go into the house of the LORD:

6 Therefore go thou, and read in the roll, which thou hast written from my mouth, the words of the LORD in the ears of the people in the LORD'S house upon the fasting day: and also thou shalt read them in the ears of all Ju'dah that come out of their cities.

7 It may be they will present their supplication before the LORD, and will return every one from his evil way: for great *is* the anger and the fury that the LORD hath pronounced against this people.

8 And Ba'ruch the son of Ne-ri'ah did according to all that Jer-e-mi'ah the prophet commanded him, reading in the book the words of the LORD in the LORD'S house.

* * * * *

20 ¶ And they went in to the king into the court, but they laid up the roll in the chamber of E-lish'a-ma the scribe, and told all the words in the ears of the king.

21 So the king sent Je-hu'di to fetch the roll: and he took it out of E-lish'a-ma the scribe's chamber. And Je-hu'di read it in the ears of the king, and in the ears of all the princes which stood beside the king.

22 Now the king sat in the winterhouse in the ninth month: and *there was a fire* on the hearth burning before him.

23 And it came to pass, *that* when Je-hu'di had read three or four leaves, he cut it with the penknife, and cast *it* into the fire that *was* on the hearth, until all the roll was consumed in the fire that *was* on the hearth.

24 Yet they were not afraid, nor rent their garments, *neither* the king, nor any of his servants that heard all these words.

* * * * *

32 ¶ Then took Jer-e-mi'ah another roll, and gave it to Ba'ruch the scribe, the son of Ne-ri'ah; who wrote therein from the mouth of Jer-e-mi'ah all the words of the book which Je-hoi'a-kim king of Ju'dah had burned in the fire: and there were added besides unto them many like words.

unto him, upon a roll of a book. 5 And Jeremiah commanded Baruch, saying, I am shut up; I cannot go into the house of Jehovah: 6 therefore go thou, and read in the roll, which thou hast written from my mouth, the words of Jehovah in the ears of the people in Jehovah's house upon the fast-day; and also thou shalt read them in the ears of all Judah that come out of their cities. 7 It may be they will present their supplication before Jehovah, and will return every one from his evil way; for great is the anger and the wrath that Jehovah hath pronounced against this people. 8 And Baruch the son of Neriah did according to all that Jeremiah the prophet commanded him, reading in the book the words of Jehovah in Jehovah's house.

* * * * *

20 And they went in to the king into the court; but they had laid up the roll in the chamber of Elishama the scribe; and they told all the words in the ears of the king. 21 So the king sent Jehudi to fetch the roll; and he took it out of the chamber of Elishama the scribe. And Jehudi read it in the ears of the king, and in the ears of all the princes that stood beside the king. 22 Now the king was sitting in the winter-house in the ninth month: and *there was a fire in* the brazier burning before him. 23 And it came to pass, when Jehudi had read three or four leaves, that *the king* cut it with the penknife, and cast it into the fire that was in the brazier, until all the roll was consumed in the fire that was in the brazier. 24 And they were not afraid, nor rent their garments, neither the king, nor any of his servants that heard all these words.

* * * * *

32 Then took Jeremiah another roll, and gave it to Baruch the scribe, the son of Neriah, who wrote therein from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of the book which Jehoiakim king of Judah had burned in the fire; and there were added besides unto them many like words.

The Time—About 604 B.C. **The Place**—Jerusalem.

DAILY HOME READINGS

Date	Title	Reference
Monday, May 29	God's Word Received and Recorded	Jer. 36 : 1-8.
Tuesday, May 30	God's Word Read to the People	Jer. 36 : 9-19.
Wednesday, May 31	The King Tries to Destroy God's Word	Jer. 36 : 20-26.
Thursday, June 1	The Prophet Rewrites God's Word	Jer. 36 : 27-32.
Friday, June 2	God's Covenant Word	Isa., ch. 55.
Saturday, June 3	Jesus and God's Word	Matt. 5 : 17-26.
Sunday, June 4	God's Word Shall Stand Forever	Isa. 40 : 1-8.

DIFFICULT WORDS AND PHRASES

4. A roll of a book. Skins of animals were stitched together and rolled upon a piece of wood. Parchment and papyrus were also used for the rolls. The writing was in columns parallel to the roller.

Baruch. A scribe, or writer. Jeremiah's attendant.

22. The winter-house. Part of the palace of the king, but apart from it. See Amos 3 : 15. **The brazier.** A metal pot containing charcoal and placed in the room for heating purposes.

THE PROPHET JEREMIAH

Jeremiah at this time was hindered from going to the Temple. He had spoken so strongly and so often to the king and to the people about the coming overthrow of Judah that the priests and false prophets had threatened his life. The conditions were much the same as in our last lesson. Jehoiakim was the king of Judah and the subject king of Egypt. The power of Egypt, however, had been broken in the great battle of Carchemish, 605 B.C., by Nebuchadnezzar, son of the king of Babylon. Almost immediately Nebuchadnezzar had to hurry home at the death of his father, to ascend the throne, but he left Judah in subjection and for three years they paid tribute to him. The fact that events had turned in such a way as to prove that Jeremiah had all along been right when he said that Egypt was a "broken reed" and Babylon would utterly destroy Judah unless the people turned to God, would make both the king and the priests, as well as the people, hesitate as to what they did to Jeremiah. His prophecies were coming true. For some reason that we are not told, however, he could not go to the Temple at this time.

THE ROLL OF THE BOOK

Jer. 36 : 4

If Jeremiah could no longer speak openly to the people, he could at least write his message to them. This he prepared to do. He had as his loyal friend and attendant a man by the name of Baruch, and to him he dictated his message to the people and to the nation. This fact is of great interest to us, for it shows how the Bible began to take shape. Jeremiah had spoken his message to the people just as Isaiah and as Elijah had done, and now since he was forbidden to speak, he wrote what he had said in a roll. The roll was made of pieces of thin, dried skins, sewed together and attached to a piece of wood. The writing was in columns, parallel to the wooden roller. In his seclusion Jeremiah dictated to Baruch the scribe what he had previously spoken. It was what Paul did. When he was shut up in prison at Rome and was unable to visit the churches, he wrote to the churches at Philippi and Colossæ and Galatia and Ephesus, and these prison letters are now part of our New Testament. When Samuel Rutherford was shut up in prison he wrote wonderful letters to his people and his friends. When John Bunyan was put in prison for preaching, he began to write and to-day we have his messages in "The Pilgrim's Progress." These men did more for the world with their pen than ever they did with their speeches. So Jeremiah, denied of the right to speak openly to the people, still spoke to the world through the marvelous words of the book that bears his name.

BARUCH'S MISSION

Jer. 36 : 5-8

After Jeremiah had finished dictating all his messages, he bade Baruch take the roll and go to the Temple upon the fast day and read it to the people in the Temple. A special fast had been proclaimed. Perhaps the fact that the army of Babylon was approaching the city caused the people, for the time being, to turn to God, and a special fast had been proclaimed. The purpose of the reading of the roll was that the people might hear and repent and turn to God. Jeremiah was a true patriot and was anxious to see his country saved and so he said to Baruch, "Go thou, and read in the roll, which thou hast written from my mouth, the words of Jehovah in the ears of the people in Jehovah's house upon the fast-day; and also thou shalt read them in the ears of all Judah that come out of their cities. It may be they will present their supplication before Jehovah, and will return every one from his evil way; for great is the anger and the wrath that Jehovah hath pronounced against this people."

READING THE ROLL

Jer. 36 : 9-19

(These verses, not printed in the text, show how Baruch carried out Jeremiah's instructions.)

When Baruch reached the Temple he betook himself to the private room of Gemariah, the brother of Ahikam, who was the strong friend and protector of Jeremiah. Baruch was then among his friends. Micaiah, the son of Gemariah, was there, and in his presence the scribe would not be molested. "The reading passed off without any hostile demonstration on the part of the people, and Micaiah went in search of his father to describe to him the scene he had just witnessed. He found him in the palace, in the chamber of the secretary of state, Elishama, attending a council of the princes. There were present, amongst others, Elnathan ben Achbor, who brought Uriah back from Egypt, Delaiah ben Shemaiah, and Zedekiah ben Hananiah. Micaiah told them what he had heard. They at once sent for Baruch to read the roll to them. When Baruch arrived, the princes greeted him with the courtesy and even deference due to the favorite disciple of a distinguished prophet. They invited him to sit down and read them the roll. Baruch obeyed; the method of reading suited the inclosed room and the quiet, interested audience of responsible men, better than the swaying crowd gathered round the door of Gemariah's chamber." The princes were alarmed when they heard the words of the prophet and said to Baruch, "Go, hide thee, thou and Jeremiah; and let no man know where ye are."

THE KING AND THE ROLL

Jer. 36 : 20-24

When the king heard the story of the roll, he ordered it to be brought to him. It was winter and

Jehoiakim was sitting in his "winter-house" with a brazier burning before him. The messenger was Jehudi, and he was ordered to read the writing to the king. The king was undismayed as the messenger read the warning words of the prophet. It is a strange scene: the king, the open fire, the wondering princes, and the open roll. The princes had been terrified when they heard the reading of this remarkable roll; not so the king. As Jehudi read one or two columns, the king reached out his hand and taking the roll, cut off with his penknife what had been read and threw it into the burning brazier. This was continued until all the roll was consumed. The princes were amazed, but "they were not afraid, nor rent their garments, neither the king, nor any of his servants that heard all these words." This then was the end of Jeremiah's roll. It had been read to the people and the princes and the king, and the end of the matter was that the king not only destroyed the roll containing the Word of God, but ordered the arrest of both Jeremiah the prophet and Baruch the scribe. "But Jehovah hid them."

THE SECOND ROLL

Jer. 36 : 32

The king accomplished nothing, for when Jeremiah heard what had happened he set to work and dictated to Baruch another roll, which contained not only all that the first roll contained but also "besides unto them many like words." The second book was doubtless the origin of our present Book of Jeremiah. It contained pictures and sketches of Jeremiah's life and reports of his speeches. What Jeremiah added to the second roll we do not know, but perhaps it contained the judgment of God upon the king. This judgment was as follows: "Therefore thus saith Jehovah concerning Jehoiakim king of Judah: He shall have none to sit upon the throne of David; and his dead body shall be cast out in the day to the heat, and in the night to the frost." The effect of all Jehoiakim's destructive policy was that he himself perish, and the Word of God prevailed.

THE GOLDEN TEXT

Isa. 40 : 8

This story of Jehoiakim's foolish attempt to destroy God's Word is a good illustration of the words of the Golden Text, "The word of our God shall stand forever." This was one of the first attempts to destroy the Word of God, but it was not the last, and all down through history men have tried to destroy the Bible. Sometimes they have succeeded in burning it or burying it or hiding it, but always it appeared again, and it is more secure to-day than ever before. The Bible is the greatest-selling Book in the world. It is the Book of books. When dying, Sir Walter Scott said to his son-in-law, "Bring me the Book." When asked what book he referred to, he replied, "There is only one Book." He, of course, meant the Bible.

THE WORLD'S BEST BOOK

The Bible is the world's best Book. The great majority of the people of the world possess the Bible in their own language. Up to the end of 1920 the Scriptures have been published in 725 languages and dialects. Some people possess no other book than the Bible.

One of the first tasks of the pioneer missionary is to translate the Bible into the language of the people. Robert Morrison translated the Bible into Chinese; Judson, into Burmese; Greene, into Japanese.

There is still much work to be done before all the people of the world possess the Bible. Although part of the Bible has been translated into 725 languages and dialects, more than half of these do not have the complete Bible, and many languages have not yet been reduced to writing.

Although unbelievers have sought to destroy the Word of God, it has increased and multiplied. Christianity is a religion which takes hold of the mind as well as of the heart, and the Word of God becomes the food of the soul.

FOR INTERMEDIATE PUPILS

1. What is meant by "A roll of a book"?
2. Why did Jeremiah write and not speak his words?
3. How did the princes and the people receive the message of the roll?
4. What did the king do to the roll of Jeremiah?
5. Why did the king destroy the roll?
6. What effect had the destruction of the roll upon Jeremiah?

The Intermediate Catechism

Q. 31. What special helps has God appointed for us in our Christian life?

A. The special helps which God has appointed for us in our Christian life are the Bible, the sacraments, prayer, and fellowship in the Church.

Q. 32. How should we use the Bible?

A. We should use the Bible with reverence, read it daily, treasure it in our hearts and obey it in our lives.

FOR SENIOR STUDENTS

1. Why was Jeremiah in seclusion?
2. What did the roll of Jeremiah contain?
3. Where was the roll first read?
4. Why did the king resent Jeremiah's message?
5. Did Jehoiakim succeed in his plan to silence Jeremiah?
6. Did the words of Jeremiah come true?

The Shorter Catechism

Q. 80. What is required in the tenth commandment?

A. The tenth commandment requireth full contentment with our own condition, with a right and charitable frame of spirit toward our neighbor, and all that is his.

Lesson XI—JEREMIAH CAST INTO PRISON

THE GOLDEN TEXT—"Be not afraid because of them; for I am with thee to deliver thee, said Jehovah."—Jer. 1:8.

TEXT OF LESSON, Jer. 38:4-13

For entire lesson, see Jer. 37:1 to 38:13

COMMON VERSION

4 Therefore the princes said unto the king, We beseech thee, let this man be put to death: for thus he weakeneth the hands of the men of war that remain in this city, and the hands of all the people, in speaking such words unto them: for this man seeketh not the welfare of this people, but the hurt.

5 Then Zed-e-ki'ah the king said, Behold, he *is* in your hand: for the king *is* not *he that* can do *any* thing against you.

6 Then took they Jer-e-mi'ah, and cast him into the dungeon of Mal-chi'ah the son of Ham'me-lech, that *was* in the court of the prison: and they let down Jer-e-mi'ah with cords. And in the dungeon *there was* no water, but mire: so Jer-e-mi'ah sunk in the mire.

7 ¶ Now when E'bed-me'lech the E-thi-o'pi-an one of the eunuchs which was in the king's house, heard that they had put Jer-e-mi'ah in the dungeon; the king then sitting in the gate of Ben'ja-min;

8 E'bed-me'lech went forth out of the king's house, and spake to the king, saying,

9 My lord the king, these men have done evil in all that they have done to Jer-e-mi'ah the prophet, whom they have cast into the dungeon; and he is like to die for hunger in the place where he is: for *there is* no more bread in the city.

10 Then the king commanded E'bed-me'lech the E-thi-o'pi-an, saying, Take from hence thirty men with thee, and take up Jer-e-mi'ah the prophet out of the dungeon, before he die.

11 So E'bed-me'lech took the men with him, and went into the house of the king under the treasury, and took thence old cast clouts and old rotten rags, and let them down by cords into the dungeon to Jer-e-mi'ah.

12 And E'bed-me'lech the E-thi-o'pi-an said unto Jer-e-mi'ah, Put now *these* old cast clouts and rotten rags under thine armholes under the cords. And Jer-e-mi'ah did so.

13 So they drew up Jer-e-mi'ah with cords, and took him up out of the dungeon: and Jer-e-mi'ah remained in the court of the prison.

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4 Then the princes said unto the king, Let this man, we pray thee, be put to death; forasmuch as he weakeneth the hands of the men of war that remain in this city, and the hands of all the people, in speaking such words unto them: for this man seeketh not the welfare of this people, but the hurt. 5 And Zedekiah the king said, Behold, he is in your hand; for the king is not he that can do any thing against you. 6 Then took they Jeremiah, and cast him into the dungeon of Malchijah the king's son, that was in the court of the guard: and they let down Jeremiah with cords. And in the dungeon there was no water, but mire; and Jeremiah sank in the mire.

7 Now when Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, a eunuch, who was in the king's house, heard that they had put Jeremiah in the dungeon, (the king then sitting in the gate of Benjamin,) 8 Ebed-melech went forth out of the king's house, and spake to the king, saying, 9 My lord the king, these men have done evil in all that they have done to Jeremiah the prophet, whom they have cast into the dungeon; and he is like to die in the place where he is, because of the famine; for there is no more bread in the city. 10 Then the king commanded Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, saying, Take from hence thirty men with thee, and take up Jeremiah the prophet out of the dungeon, before he die. 11 So Ebed-melech took the men with him, and went into the house of the king under the treasury, and took thence rags and worn-out garments, and let them down by cords into the dungeon to Jeremiah. 12 And Ebed-melech the Ethiopian said unto Jeremiah, Put now these rags and worn-out garments under thine armholes under the cords. And Jeremiah did so. 13 So they drew up Jeremiah with the cords, and took him up out of the dungeon: and Jeremiah remained in the court of the guard.

The Time—About 587 B.C. **The Place**—Jerusalem.

DAILY HOME READINGS

Date	Title	Reference
Monday, June 5	The Prophet's Warning	Jer. 37 : 1-10.
Tuesday, June 6	The Prophet Accused and Imprisoned	Jer. 37 : 11-15.
Wednesday, June 7	The Prophet Appeals to the King	Jer. 37 : 16-21.
Thursday, June 8	The Prophet Consigned to the Dungeon	Jer. 38 : 1-6.
Friday, June 9	The Prophet Rescued from the Dungeon	Jer. 38 : 7-13.
Saturday, June 10	John the Baptist Imprisoned	Luke 3 : 15-20.
Sunday, June 11	Jehovah's Deliverance	Ps. 40 : 1-8.

DIFFICULT WORDS AND PHRASES

4. The men of war. Already a good many soldiers had deserted. See v. 19.

5. The king is not he. Zedekiah the king was conscious of his own weakness. He could do nothing of himself. He was in the hands of the princes.

6. The dungeon of Malchijah. Malchijah had charge of the dungeon, or rather the cistern.

9. Like to die. Margin, "He is dead." Literally "He is dead of hunger on the spot." The words are urgent and impulsive. **No more bread.** With short rations in the city, Jeremiah would have no chance for food in the dungeon.

10. Thirty men. A force large enough to oppose any attempt of the princes to interfere.

THE LAST OF THE KINGS

We must understand the history of the times before we can understand the life of Jeremiah, Judah's great prophet. In our last lesson Jehoiakim, king of Judah, had openly destroyed the roll which Jeremiah had written. We do not hear of Jeremiah's speaking openly during Jehoiakim's reign after that event. Jehoiakim became a vassal to the king of Babylon and died a dishonored death. See ch. 22 : 18, 19. His son Jehoiachin, or Coniah, as he is called, ch. 37 : 1, was made king of Judah by Nebuchadnezzar, but after a reign of only three months he was carried off a captive to Babylon where he remained a prisoner for thirty-six long years. The end of Judah was not far distant. The Temple and the city had been entered by the Babylonians and Judah had lost its independence. The last king was Zedekiah, the son of the good king Josiah. He reigned from about 598 to 587 B.C. He was weak and powerless, easily swayed by a strong party in the state. He was well disposed to Jeremiah at the last and sought to defend him from the princes of Judah who had turned against him, but neither he nor his people listened to the word of God as spoken by Jeremiah.

JEREMIAH IN PRISON

Because Jeremiah prophesied the conquering of Judah by Babylon the people were eager to silence him and the king was too weak to defend him. One day as Jeremiah was leaving Jerusalem to attend to some personal business in the land of Benjamin, a captain named Irijah laid hands on him, arrested him, charged him with deserting to the enemy, and delivered him to the princes who had become the real rulers in Jerusalem, and they put him in prison, in the house of Jonathan the scribe, ch. 37 : 15. Zedekiah the king learned that Jeremiah had been arrested and sent for him. After a personal interview he gave him over to the guard who were ordered to give him daily a loaf of bread as long as bread was left in the city. Here he had more liberty and so he began again to speak to the people, telling them that their best policy was to surrender to the Babylonians who were already besieging the city. "This city," said Jeremiah, "shall surely be given into the hand of the army of the king of Babylon, and he shall take it."

THE CHARGE AGAINST JEREMIAH

Jer. 38 : 4

We can easily understand how the people and the princes felt about the words of the prophet. During the South African War a soldier was tried by court-martial and the charge against him was that he was a "discourager." That is a deadly offense in time of war. Well, Jeremiah was a discourager. The city was under siege. The people were suffering famine. The army of Babylon surrounded the city. Some of the soldiers of the city had deserted to the Chaldean army and Jeremiah kept saying that the city could not escape and the only thing to do was to surrender to the enemy. Of course Jeremiah was right, for God had revealed the future to him, and this was what the city had to do eventually. However, after Jeremiah had spoken to the people urging them to give in to the king of Babylon the princes brought the prophet to Zedekiah and said, "Let this man, we pray thee, be put to death; forasmuch as he weakeneth the hands of the men of war that remain in this city, and the hands of all the people, in speaking such words unto them: for this man seeketh not the welfare of this people, but the hurt." These princes refused to believe that Jeremiah was speaking not for himself but for God. He would gladly have died to save his country, but he would not remain silent when God bade him speak.

THE DUNGEON AS A REWARD

Jer. 38 : 5, 6

The king was helpless. He was friendly in his heart to the prophet, but he was powerless to help. He told the princes that "the king is not he that can do any thing against you." What a king! He was a weak, cowardly, wavering ruler, and, like Pilate who, willing to please the people, delivered Jesus to be crucified, so the king delivered Jeremiah, the man of God, and one of Judah's truest patriots, to the princes, who took him and let him down by ropes into a deep, dark, miry dungeon, an empty cistern, and there left him to die. This was the reward then of his loyalty. Sometimes we ask the question, "Does it pay to do right?" It depends on what we mean by pay. For doing right Jesus was rewarded with the cross. For doing right Paul was sentenced to death by Nero. God does not "pay" his servants in the coin of the world. They get their reward in the peace and joy that come to their hearts in knowing that they have been true. The world would not be what it is to-day if all men and women had taken the easy way and refused to suffer for God. Jesus said, "Blessed are they that have been persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Once when he was asked concerning the reward of the Christian life, Jesus answered, "Ver-

ily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or mother, or father, or children, or lands, for my sake, and for the gospel's sake, but he shall receive a hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life."

THE FOREIGN FRIEND

Jer. 38 : 7-9

There are perhaps seventeen years between this and our last lesson. In the former lesson the princes were friendly to Jeremiah, but in this lesson they are his sworn enemies. They put him in the empty dungeon to die. And he would have died had not an unexpected friend rescued him.

The story of Ebed-melech, the Ethiopian, is interesting and very dramatic. He was a foreigner, a negro, a servant in the house of the king. Perhaps he knew Jeremiah and had formed a secret friendship for him. At any rate, when the princes led Jeremiah off, the Ethiopian followed them and discovered his prison.

He returned to the king, and his excitement and eagerness are still in his words. He first of all denounced the princes and said plainly that they had done wrong. In saying this he was also indirectly blaming the king who had given Jeremiah into their hands. There is such a thing as right, and the difference between right and wrong cannot be covered, and Ebed-melech knew that wrong had been done to Jeremiah, and he said so. This took courage on the part of a humble servant who took his own life in his hands by appealing to the king. But Ebed-melech was led on by love of Jeremiah and by love of right. His words are full of fire and burning indignation. "He is like to die," he said. His words, however, were "He is dead," meaning "He is as good as dead." There was no hope for him there. He would die of hunger if he were not soon rescued. We cannot but admire this loyal foreigner.

THE RESCUE OF JEREMIAH

Jer. 38 : 10-13

The king with all his moral weakness was interested in the story of his servant and secretly planned Jeremiah's rescue. Giving Ebed-melech, his trusty servant, thirty men to ward off any attack or interference on the part of the princes, he sent him with them to the dungeon in haste. The condition of Jeremiah was serious. He was weak through exposure and starvation. So in his tender care for him, Ebed-melech gathered soft rags and made them into ropes and told Jeremiah to put his arms through the loop he had made so that he would not even have to cling to the ropes, but allow himself to be lifted up out of the dungeon by his friends. "So they drew up Jeremiah with the cords, and took him up out of the dungeon: and Jeremiah remained in the court of the guard." It was an act of great love and friendliness, and revealed a human side to the prophet which is very pleasant. Jeremiah had been forsaken by all his friends except the foreign, negro servant. There is a wonderful lesson for all of us who have known the message of the gospel. God may pass by the young men and women of America and give the Kingdom of the future to the youth of China and India, if we do not obey his word and work his will. In speaking to the Jews of his day, Jesus said, "And I say unto you, that many shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven: but the sons of the kingdom shall be cast forth into the outer darkness." In the eleventh year of Zedekiah, 587 B.C., the city was captured, the king's eyes were put out, and he died an exile in a dungeon in Babylon. Jeremiah was permitted to remain in Jerusalem, but later went into Egypt where he died. His word, or rather the word of God, that never fails, came true.

A MISSIONARY GOSPEL

Our interest is turned for a moment from Jeremiah to the negro servant who saved his life. He had learned from Jeremiah the story of the true God, and while priest and people forgot God this colored man from Africa found him and followed him. "God so loved the world." Are you sure that the familiarity of these great words have not made you deaf to the wonder of the message? Of course you are sure, confidently sure, that God loved you, loved you in your sin and loved you out of it, but the words are filled with a deeper meaning and the water of life touches other shores than those of your life. It was the world, not America only, that he carried in his arms. The love of God is a missionary love that holds in its warm embrace the children of every race and of every land and knows no distinction between East and West, North and South. Like the great ocean that washes the shores of many nations and continents, so does the love of God touch every heart and every life and every land. "The love of God is broader than the measures of man's mind." It is as wide as eternity, as deep as the last need of life.

FOR INTERMEDIATE PUPILS

1. Name the last kings of Judah.
2. What happened to Zedekiah, the last of the kings?
3. Why had the princes turned against Jeremiah?
4. Describe the dungeon into which Jeremiah was put.
5. Who rescued Jeremiah, and how was it done?
6. Where did Jeremiah die?

The Intermediate Catechism

Q. 33. What are the sacraments?

A. The sacraments are the two sacred observ-

ances which Christ gave to the Church, baptism and the Lord's Supper.

Q. 34. What is baptism?

A. Baptism is the sacred use of water, as appointed by Jesus Christ, to signify God's cleansing us of our sins, our consecration to God and our membership in the Church.

FOR SENIOR STUDENTS

1. Why was Jeremiah so persecuted?
2. Describe the character of Zedekiah.
3. Who was Ebed-melech?
4. When and by whom was Jerusalem destroyed?
5. What was Jeremiah's reward for faithfulness?
6. What is your estimate of the character of Jeremiah?

The Shorter Catechism

Q. 81. What is forbidden in the tenth commandment?

A. The tenth commandment forbiddeth all discontentment with our own estate, envying or grieving at the good of our neighbor, and all inordinate motions and affections to anything that is his.

Lesson XII—THE DOWNFALL OF JUDAH

THE GOLDEN TEXT—"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."—Gal. 6: 7.

TEXT OF LESSON, II Kings 25: 1-12

For entire lesson, see II Kings 25: 1-21

COMMON VERSION

1 And it came to pass in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, in the tenth *day* of the month, *that* Neb-u-chad-nez'zar king of Bab'y-lon came, he, and all his host, against Je-ru'sa-lem, and pitched against it; and they built forts against it round about.

2 And the city was besieged unto the eleventh year of king Zed-e-ki'ah.

3 And on the ninth *day* of the *fourth* month the famine prevailed in the city, and there was no bread for the people of the land.

4 ¶ And the city was broken up, and all the men of war *fled* by night by the way of the gate between two walls, which *is* by the king's garden: (now the Chal-dees' *were* against the city round about:) and *the king* went the way toward the plain.

5 And the army of the Chal-dees' pursued after the king, and overtook him in the plains of Jer'i-cho: and all his army were scattered from him.

6 So they took the king, and brought him up to the king of Bab'y-lon to Rib'lah; and they gave judgment upon him.

7 And they slew the sons of Zed-e-ki'ah before his eyes, and put out the eyes of Zed-e-ki'ah, and bound him with fetters of brass, and carried him to Bab'y-lon.

8 ¶ And in the fifth month, on the seventh *day* of the month, which *is* the nineteenth year of king Neb-u-chad-nez'zar king of Bab'y-lon, came Neb-u'-zar-a'dan, captain of the guard, a servant of the king of Bab'y-lon, unto Je-ru'sa-lem:

9 And he burnt the house of the LORD, and the king's house, and all the houses of Je-ru'sa-lem, and every great *man's* house burnt he with fire.

AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE

1 And it came to pass in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, in the tenth day of the month, that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came, he and all his army, against Jerusalem, and encamped against it; and they built forts against it round about. 2 So the city was besieged unto the eleventh year of king Zedekiah. 3 On the ninth day of the *fourth* month the famine was sore in the city, so that there was no bread for the people of the land. 4 Then a breach was made in the city, and all the men of war *fled* by night by the way of the gate between the two walls, which was by the king's garden; (now the Chaldeans were against the city round about;) and *the king* went by the way of the Arabah. 5 But the army of the Chaldeans pursued after the king, and overtook him in the plains of Jericho; and all his army was scattered from him. 6 Then they took the king, and carried him up unto the king of Babylon to Riblah; and they gave judgment upon him. 7 And they slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, and put out the eyes of Zedekiah, and bound him in fetters, and carried him to Babylon.

8 Now in the fifth month, on the seventh day of the month, which was the nineteenth year of king Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, came Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard, a servant of the king of Babylon, unto Jerusalem. 9 And he burnt the house of Jehovah, and the king's house; and all the houses of Jerusalem, even every great

10 And all the army of the Chal-dees', that *were with* the captain of the guard, brake down the walls of Je-ru'sa-lem round about.

11 Now the rest of the people *that were* left in the city, and the fugitives that fell away to the king of Bab-y-lon, with the remnant of the multitude, did Neb-u'zar-a'dan the captain of the guard carry away.

12 But the captain of the guard left of the poor of the land *to be* vinedressers and husbandmen.

house, burnt he with fire. 10 And all the army of the Chaldeans, that were *with* the captain of the guard, brake down the walls of Jerusalem round about. 11 And the residue of the people that were left in the city, and those that fell away, that fell to the king of Babylon, and the residue of the multitude, did Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carry away captive. 12 But the captain of the guard left of the poorest of the land to be vinedressers and husbandmen.

The Time—587 B.C. **The Place**—Jerusalem.

DAILY HOME READINGS

Date	Title	Reference
Monday, June 12	A Servile King	II Kings 24 : 1-9.
Tuesday, June 13	A Captive King	II Kings 24 : 10-20.
Wednesday, June 14	The Downfall of Judah	II Kings 25 : 1-12.
Thursday, June 15	The Temple and the Land Despoiled	II Kings 25 : 13-21.
Friday, June 16	God Warns His People	Deut. 28 : 15-24.
Saturday, June 17	Jesus Warns Jerusalem	Luke 19 : 41-48.
Sunday, June 18	Sorrow in Captivity	Ps. 137 : 1-6.

DIFFICULT WORDS AND PHRASES

1. Built forts. Perhaps towers by which men could be placed on the walls.

4. A breach was made. Before this occurred, an Egyptian army appeared and the army of Babylon was withdrawn, but only for a while. See Jer. 37 : 5-11. **The Arabah.** The valley of the Jordan. The fugitives sought to cross the fords of the Jordan.

7. Put out the eyes. Ezekiel the prophet had said that Zedekiah would not see Babylon. See Ezek. 12 : 13.

THE LAST OF THE KINGS

II Kings 25 : 1, 2

The last sentence of ch. 24 should be joined with the first verse of the lesson. "And Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon." From the time of Jehoiakim, the kings of Judah had paid tribute to foreign kings. When Judah had been beaten at the battle of Megiddo, Judah became a tribute nation to Egypt, and for years Jehoiakim looked to Egypt for his security. In 605 B.C. Egypt fell before Babylon as Nineveh had fallen the year before. This great battle made Nebuchadnezzar master of the world, and with him Jehoiakim in turn made his peace. Jehoiakim, however, rebelled against Babylon and was captured and carried in a cage into the presence of Nebuchadnezzar. He died, or was murdered, and his son Jehoiachin succeeded him. At the end of three months Jehoiachin surrendered and was carried off to Babylon where he was in prison thirty-six years. Nebuchadnezzar "took back with him to Babylon all the court, the aristocracy, the wealthy men, the standing army, and the skilled workmen; in all about ten or eleven thousand people. The city was sacked, the treasury emptied, and all the gold and silver vessels used in the Temple service were carried as prizes to the gods of Babylon. Jeremiah escaped deportation, possibly because Nebuchadnezzar felt that the prophet was the greatest guarantee of future peace he could leave in the city."

Only the weak and worthless were left in Judah, and over this worthless remnant Zedekiah was made king. He was the son of Josiah and the uncle of Jehoiachin. For four years he was loyal to Babylon, and then on account of the false advice from false prophets and false assurances from Moab and Ammon, Tyre and Sidon, he made a secret league with them. He was called to Babylon and given another chance. Four years later he again entered into a league with Egypt, and in 589 he revolted and declared his loyalty to Babylon at an end. This was an act of folly which Jeremiah denounced. Immediately Nebuchadnezzar's army besieged Jerusalem.

THE SIEGE OF JERUSALEM

II Kings 25: 3

In our last lesson we saw how Jeremiah opposed the weak and changing policy of Zedekiah. Remember, too, that Nebuchadnezzar had already taken away the leaders and strong men of Judah, and only the weak and powerless remained. They indulged the false hope that Jerusalem could not be destroyed. They had a blind faith that somehow God would protect Jerusalem as he had done so miraculously in the days of Hezekiah. Jeremiah advised surrendering to Nebuchadnezzar, but the king had the support of the people and they felt that Egypt would come to their relief. And Egypt did come and the Babylonian army was compelled to raise the siege. "The city went wild with joy. Jehovah had again rescued his holy city as he did in Isaiah's day! But in their enthusiasm

they did something that exposed their absolute lack of honor even in dealing with their God; they re-enslaved their Hebrew brethren whom they had just set free. This act convinced Jeremiah that Judah's fate was irrevocable; she was not worth saving. He sent word to Zedekiah that Nebuchadnezzar would return and fulfill every syllable of the doom Jehovah had pronounced. As the prophet foresaw, Nebuchadnezzar scattered the Egyptian army and returned to the siege. Conditions in Jerusalem now became hopeless. The food supply soon was exhausted and disease broke out.'' It was at this time that the events of our last lesson took place. Jeremiah was put in a filthy cistern but escaped with the help of Ebed-melech, the faithful negro slave who dared to befriend him.

THE CAPTURE OF JERUSALEM

II Kings 25 : 4-12

The siege lasted for a year and a half, with the exception of the brief period when the Egyptians came to the relief of Judah. It began in the tenth month, 589, and came to an end in the fourth month, 587. The tenth month corresponds to our January, and the fourth, to July. For weeks and months the end was sure. The people began to desert to the enemy in the night, and when the wall was broken through the army of Nebuchadnezzar poured into the half-starved city, and the king and the people fled. The Babylonian soldiers looted the city and took away everything of value, robbing the Temple even of its brass.

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THE CAPTIVITY OF JUDAH

The story of the havoc and ruin wrought by Babylon is told in the remaining verses of the chapter and should be read. No wonder the Jews hated Babylon. The very name of Babylon became to them the symbol of all that was evil.

Psalm 137 begins with the words,

> ''By the rivers of Babylon,
> There we sat down, yea, we wept,
> When we remembered Zion,''

and ends with the curse,

> ''O daughter of Babylon, that art to be destroyed,
> Happy shall he be, that rewardeth thee
> As thou hast served us.''

THE CAPTURE OF THE KING

II Kings 25 : 6, 7

Even the king and the people who fled from the city did not escape. They tried to reach the Arabah, as the valley of the Jordan was called, but were caught and captured before reaching it. Nebuchadnezzar had made his headquarters at Riblah, to the north, and there they took the captured king and the people. The king's sons were put to death in his presence, and then his own eyes were put out. ''All the nobles of Judah'' were also put to death, and then the blind king and the captive people were carried off to Babylon. This then was the end of their disloyalty to God, and their dishonesty in political affairs. The word of God as spoken by Jeremiah had come true and Jerusalem was trodden underfoot by the heathen people of Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar, however, did not allow Judah to become a desert land. He appointed Gedaliah, a man of fine qualities and the friend of Jeremiah, as governor. Gedaliah guided the country wisely, but he was murdered by one who claimed the right to the throne. During all these unhappy events where was Jeremiah? He, too, was brought before Nebuchadnezzar. Of course his career and his attitude toward the siege were not unknown and he was well treated and given the choice of remaining in Jerusalem, or going to Babylon where he would be cared for. Like a true patriot he chose to remain in Jerusalem.

THE CAREER OF JEREMIAH

Jeremiah remained in Judah while Gedaliah was governor. He was his friend. When Gedaliah was foully murdered, the best of the people, fearing the wrath of Babylon, fled to Egypt taking Jere-

miah with them. "The last cry that has come down to us from Jeremiah's lips is his bitter denunciation of the idolatry of this Egyptian remnant. A late tradition says that for his faithfulness to the truth he was stoned to death by his own people."

For nearly half a century Jeremiah had tried to guide his nation. He warned and cautioned it. He knew it was idle to oppose Babylon. Judah was weak. Babylon was strong, and Judah had been false to God. Yet Jeremiah was hopeful that in the end God would redeem his people. "He held firmly to the faith that the people of God could never perish. 'Thus saith Jehovah, who giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, who stirreth up the sea, so that the waves thereof roar; Jehovah of hosts is his name: If those ordinances depart from before me, saith Jehovah, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever.' Not only would the nation persist, but the soil of the Holy Land, from which it had been expelled, would be restored to it. Of his faith in this restitution Jeremiah gave a signal proof by purchasing a field in the neighborhood of Jerusalem, in the height of the Babylonian siege. The Roman historian, Livy, gives an account of a transaction almost identical at the moment when Hannibal was at the gates of Rome: the very spot on which the Carthaginian general was encamped was purchased at its full value by a Roman citizen who did not despair of the republic." In the lessons of the next quarter we will see that Jeremiah's hopes were realized and the people were brought back again into their own land.

THE BABYLONIAN CAPTIVITY

Israel, the Northern Kingdom, had been destroyed and its people carried into captivity by Assyria. Now Judah is overthrown, Jerusalem destroyed, and king and people carried off into Babylonia. Jeremiah told even the length of time of that Captivity. "After seventy years are accomplished for Babylon, I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place." Babylon was then a mighty empire, the ruler of the world, but Jeremiah foretold its downfall and the escape of Israel. It was a remarkable prophecy of hope. It was a most unlikely occurrence, but Jeremiah again and again spoke of it. "The word that came to Jeremiah from Jehovah, saying, Thus speaketh Jehovah, the God of Israel, saying, Write thee all the words that I have spoken unto thee in a book, For, lo, the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will turn again the captivity of my people Israel and Judah, saith Jehovah; and I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall possess it."

When Israel grew great she faltered and fell. When she was weak she became strong in faith. This is the recurring story of the national life of Israel. In the heyday of their history they reveled and drank and forgot God, and at last "the destruction that wasteth at noonday" swept them from their homes and their country into a strange land, and then, in the solitude of the Babylonian Exile, they found their nationality again. It was in Babylon, in humiliation and overthrow, that God gave them their songs in the night. It was there they sang,

> "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem,
> Let my right hand forget her skill."

FOR INTERMEDIATE PUPILS

1. What happened to Zedekiah, the last king of Judah?
2. Was he a strong or a weak king?
3. Who was Nebuchadnezzar and why did he fight against Judah?
4. How long was Jerusalem under siege by the Babylonians?
5. How did Nebuchadnezzar treat the people of Jerusalem?
6. How was Jeremiah treated and where did he end his days?

The Intermediate Catechism

Q. 35. Why are the infant children of members of the Church dedicated to God in baptism?

A. The infant children of members of the Church are dedicated to God in baptism because his covenant made with believing parents includes their children.

Q. 36. What is expected of baptized children?

A. It is expected of baptized children that they will think of themselves as dedicated to God and, in early years, confess Jesus Christ and come to the Lord's Supper.

FOR SENIOR STUDENTS

1. What do we mean when we speak of the Babylonian Captivity?
2. Why did Jeremiah oppose the policy of the Kingdom of Judah?
3. Why did Nebuchadnezzar make war on Jerusalem?
4. Who was Zedekiah and what happened to him?
5. Why did Nebuchadnezzar destroy the city of Jerusalem?
6. Describe the character and career of Jeremiah.

The Shorter Catechism

Q. 82. Is any man able perfectly to keep the commandments of God?

A. No mere man, since the fall, is able, in this life, perfectly to keep the commandments of God; but doth daily break them in thought, word, and deed.

Lesson XIII—REVIEW—JUDAH'S PROSPERITY AND ADVERSITY

THE GOLDEN TEXT—"Blessed is the nation whose God is Jehovah."—Ps. 33: 12.

Devotional Reading, Ps. 65: 1, 2, 8-13

The Time—931 B.C. to 587 B.C. **The Place**—Jerusalem.

DAILY HOME READINGS

Date	Title	Reference
Monday, June 19	A Good King	II Chron. 14 : 1-8.
Tuesday, June 20	Giving and Working for God's House	II Kings 12 : 9-16.
Wednesday, June 21	Pride and Punishment	II Chron. 26 : 11-21.
Thursday, June 22	God's Call to Isaiah	Isa. 6 : 1-12.
Friday, June 23	A Call to Worship	II Chron. 30 : 1-12.
Saturday, June 24	The King Tries to Destroy God's Word	Jer. 36 : 20-26.
Sunday, June 25	The Downfall of Judah	II Kings 25 : 1-12.

JUDAH'S PROSPERITY AND ADVERSITY

INTRODUCTORY. Secure a map of the world showing the Kingdoms of Israel and Judah. Look carefully at the relation of the kingdoms of Assyria, Babylon, and Egypt to Judah and Israel. Assyria was overthrown about 607 B.C. by the Medes, the Babylonians, and their allies. After Egypt, to which power Judah became a vassal nation, came Babylon, which conquered Judah and destroyed Jerusalem. In our next quarter we will study the overthrow of Babylon and the rise of the Persian power.

1. The Kingdom of Judah lasted for about 344 years. During that period the kingdoms of Assyria, Egypt, and Babylon, were in their glory. We may think that Judah's day was short. It was really not so. While the kings of Judah came and went, Assyria went down in crashing ruin, Egypt fell from her place, and Babylon came upon the scene.

2. Of the kings of Judah some were good and some were bad. We think of the weakness and foolishness of Rehoboam. We remember the wise ways of Joash, Hezekiah, and Josiah. We call to mind the dreadful wickedness and idolatry of Manasseh, Amon, Queen Athaliah. We are disgusted with the weakness and wavering policy of Jehoiakim and Zedekiah. Make an attempt to characterize personally some of the rulers of Judah. Get the pupils to lay away in memory something definite about Rehoboam, Joash, Uzziah, Josiah, Hezekiah, Zedekiah. There is a personal note in the lives of each of these men that will make remembering easy.

3. The real rulers of Judah were not its kings, but its prophets. The great message of Isaiah should be emphasized. "He was the greatest statesman of Hebrew history. Through repeated crises he offered counsels which if followed would have brought peace and comparative prosperity to little Judah. His principles of action were founded upon a clear idea of justice and on a deep religious faith, and therefore he could endure opposition and disgrace—as during most of his life he was obliged to endure them—he could challenge iniquity in high places and labor unceasingly for the redemption of his nation. **He was primarily a prophet of action.**" Jeremiah's character is strong and appealing. His message was a message which interpreted sorrow and suffering. He was the forerunner and herald of Jesus and his cross. His message was that there is victory even in defeat.

4. Judah's fall is always attributed not to political reasons but to moral causes. Judah had turned away from God. When a nation falls there are other than material and political reasons. The morale of the nation has been lost. The righteous laws have been undermined. "Righteousness exalteth a nation." This is the one recurring thought and message of the Bible. History may be spelled "His—Story." Abraham Lincoln said, "No nation can exist half slave and half free." It does not matter what the slavery is, human, industrial, social, or moral.

5. God judges both men and nations. He passed judgment upon Israel and now because of her sin he judged Judah. He passed sentence on both Assyria and Egypt and the time would come, as Jeremiah said, when for her sin Babylon in turn would suffer condemnation. This has been called, "The irony of history." We have seen it in the history of Ahab, Sennacherib, Nebuchadnezzar; of Herod; of Alexander the Great, dying "as a fool dieth," drunken and miserable, in the supreme hour of his conquests; of Napoleon, hurled into the dust, first by the retreat from Moscow, then by the overthrow at Waterloo, and in our day we have seen the late Kaiser of Germany overthrown and disgraced.

6. The purpose of history. Nations rise and fall, but God's plan abides. The purpose of God in human history is salvation. The prophets spoke of the time when the promised Saviour would come, and all these strange events were but the preparation of the world for the coming of Christ. "Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For seeing that in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom knew not God, it was God's good pleasure through the foolishness of the preaching to save them that believe." God was leading the world through the school of discipline into the school of Christ, and step by step the world was learning the lessons needed to understand Jesus' mission and message.

ORDERS OF SERVICE FOR SECOND QUARTER, 1922[1]

OPENING SERVICE, No. 1

THE OLD TESTAMENT BENEDICTION.—(All standing.)

"Jehovah bless thee, and keep thee:
Jehovah make his face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee:
Jehovah lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace."

SILENT PRAYER.

THE LORD'S PRAYER.

PSALM 23, RESPONSIVELY.

HYMN.—"Alleluia," No. 81, "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name!"

MISSIONARY ADDRESS.—(Five minutes.)

HYMN (Missionary).—"Alleluia," No. 138, "The World Must Be Taken for Jesus."

THE SCRIPTURE LESSON.

HYMN (Without announcement).—"Break Thou the Bread of Life."

PRAYER BY THE PASTOR.

MUSIC.—Instrumental or Vocal.

OFFERING AND RECORDS.

HYMN.—"Alleluia," No. 275, "With Happy Voices Singing."

THE TEACHING OF THE LESSON.

PIANO (Softly).—"Onward, Christian Soldiers."

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND SECRETARY'S REPORT.

HYMN.—"Alleluia," No. 102, "Father of Mercies, in Thy Word."

BENEDICTION.

OPENING SERVICE, No. 2

HYMN (Unannounced).—"Safely Through Another Week."

(Doors closed.)

THE APOSTLES' CREED.—The Gloria.

(Doors opened.)

HYMN.—"Alleluia," No. 303, "O Lord Our God, Thy Mighty Hand."

RESPONSIVE READING.—Psalm 122.

HYMN.—"Alleluia," No. 298, "God of Our Fathers, Whose Almighty Hand."

FIVE MINUTE TALK BY THE PASTOR.—Theme—"For Christ and the Church."

GOSPEL SOLO.

SILENT PRAYER.

HYMN.—"Alleluia," No. 82, "Jesus, King of Glory."

PRAYER BY ONE OF THE TEACHERS.

THE SCRIPTURE LESSON.

HYMN.—"Alleluia," No. 234, "Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus."

RECORDS AND OFFERING.

LESSON HYMN.—"Break Thou the Bread of Life."

THE LESSON PERIOD.

PIANO (One Verse).—"My Faith Looks Up to Thee."

SECRETARY'S REPORT

SUPERINTENDENT'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

HYMN.—"Alleluia," No. 55, "All Glory, Laud, and Honor."

THE LORD'S PRAYER.

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